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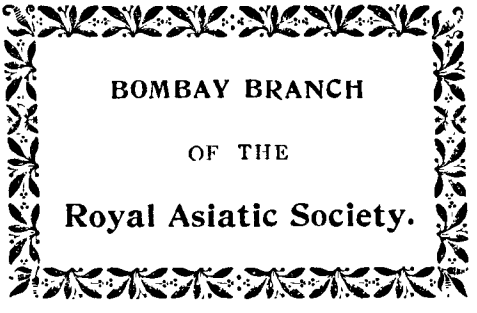

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RAMBLES

IN THE ISLANDS OF

CORSICA AND SARDINIA.

WITH

NOTICES OF THEIR HISTORY, ANTIQUITIES, AND PRESENT CONDITION.

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BY THOMAS FORESTER

AUTHOR OF "NORWAY IN 1848–1849," ETC.

LONDON

LONGMAN, BROWN, GREEN, LONGMANS, AND ROBERTS.

1858

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PREFACE.

NEARLY a century ago, James Boswell made an expedition to Corsica, and was entertained with distinction by Pascal Paoli. Next to conducting Samuel Johnson to the Hebrides, the exploit of penetrating to what was then considered a sort of *Ultima Thule* in southern Europe, was the greatest event in the famous biographer's life; and, next to his devotion to the English sage, was the homage he paid to the Corsican chief.

Soon after his return from this expedition, in 1767, Boswell printed his Journal, with a valuable account of the island; but from that time to the present, no Englishman has written on Corsica except Mr. Robert Benson, who published some short "Sketches" of its history, scenery, and people in 1825. During the war of the revolution, Nelson's squadron hung like a thunder-cloud round the coast, and for some time an

expeditionary force of British troops held possession of the island. Our George the Third accepted the Corsican crown, but his reign was as ephemeral as that of King Theodore, the aspiring adventurer, who ended his days in the Fleet Prison.

These occurrences, with any knowledge of the country and people arising out of them, have passed from the memory of the present generation; and it may be affirmed, without exaggeration, that when the tour forming the subject of the present work was projected and carried out, Corsica was less known in England than New Zealand. The general impression concerning it was tolerably correct. Imagination painted it as a wild and romantic country, —romantic in its scenery and the character of its inhabitants; a very region of romance and sentiment; a fine field for the novelist and the dramatist; and to that class of writers it was abandoned.

Corsica had yet to be faithfully pictured to the just apprehension of the discerning inquirer. Naturally therefore the author, whose narratives of his wanderings in more than one quarter of the globe had been favourably received, was not indisposed to commit to the press the result of his observations during his Corsican rambles. Just then, translations of an account of a Tour in the island by a German

traveller, appeared in England, and being written in an attractive style, the work commanded considerable attention. It seemed to fill the gap in English literature on the subject of Corsica; and though the writer of these pages felt that M. Gregorovius' pictures of Corsican life were too highly coloured, he was inclined to leave the field in the hands which had cultivated it with talent and success. Eventually, however, being led to think that Corsica was still open to survey from an English point of view, and that it possessed sufficient legitimate attractions to sustain the interest of such a work as he had designed, the author was induced to undertake it.

If the field of literature connected with Corsica was found barren when examined in prospect of this expedition, that of Sardinia presented an *embarras de richesses.* The works of La Marmora, Captain, now Admiral, Smyth, and Mr. Warre Tyndale, had seemingly exhausted the subject, with a success the mere Rambler can make no pretensions to rival; but the former being a foreign work, and the two latter out of print, neither of them is easily accessible. They have been sometimes used, in the following pages, to throw light on subjects which came under the author's own observation. He has also consulted a valuable work, recently published at Naples, by F. Antonio

Bresciani, of the Society of Jesus*, on the manners and habits of the Sardes compared with those of the oldest Oriental nations. The comparisons are chiefly gathered from scenes and usages depicted in the narratives of Homer and the Bible, still singularly reflected in the habits and traditions of the primitive and insular people of Sardinia.

Some of these are noticed in the present volume, and the author intended to draw more largely on the rich stores accumulated by the researches of the learned Jesuit; but time and space failed. Like truant boys, the Ramblers had loitered on their early path, idly amusing themselves with very trifles, or stopping to gather the wild flowers that fell in their way, till the harvest-field was reached too late to be carefully gleaned. For a work, however, of this description, attention enough has perhaps been paid to the subject of Sarde antiquities; it being intended to be amusing as well as instructive, to convey information on the character of the people on whom it treats, as well as on their institutions and monuments.

If, in conclusion, it be mentioned that the delay in bringing out the volume, long since announced, has been caused by ill health and other painful

* *Dei Costumi dell' Isola di Sardegna, comparate cogli antichissimi Popoli Orientali, par Antonio Bresciani. D.C.D.G. Napoli*, 1850.

circumstances, the Author is only anxious that it should not be misinterpreted, as attaching to the work an importance to which it does not pretend. But there is the less reason for regretting this delay, as it has afforded him another opportunity of visiting Sardinia, as well as of witnessing the operation of laying down the submarine electric telegraph cable between Cagliari and the African coast; an event in Sardinian history, some notice of which, with the accompanying trip to Algeria, may form a not uninteresting episode to the Rambles in that island.

May, 1858.

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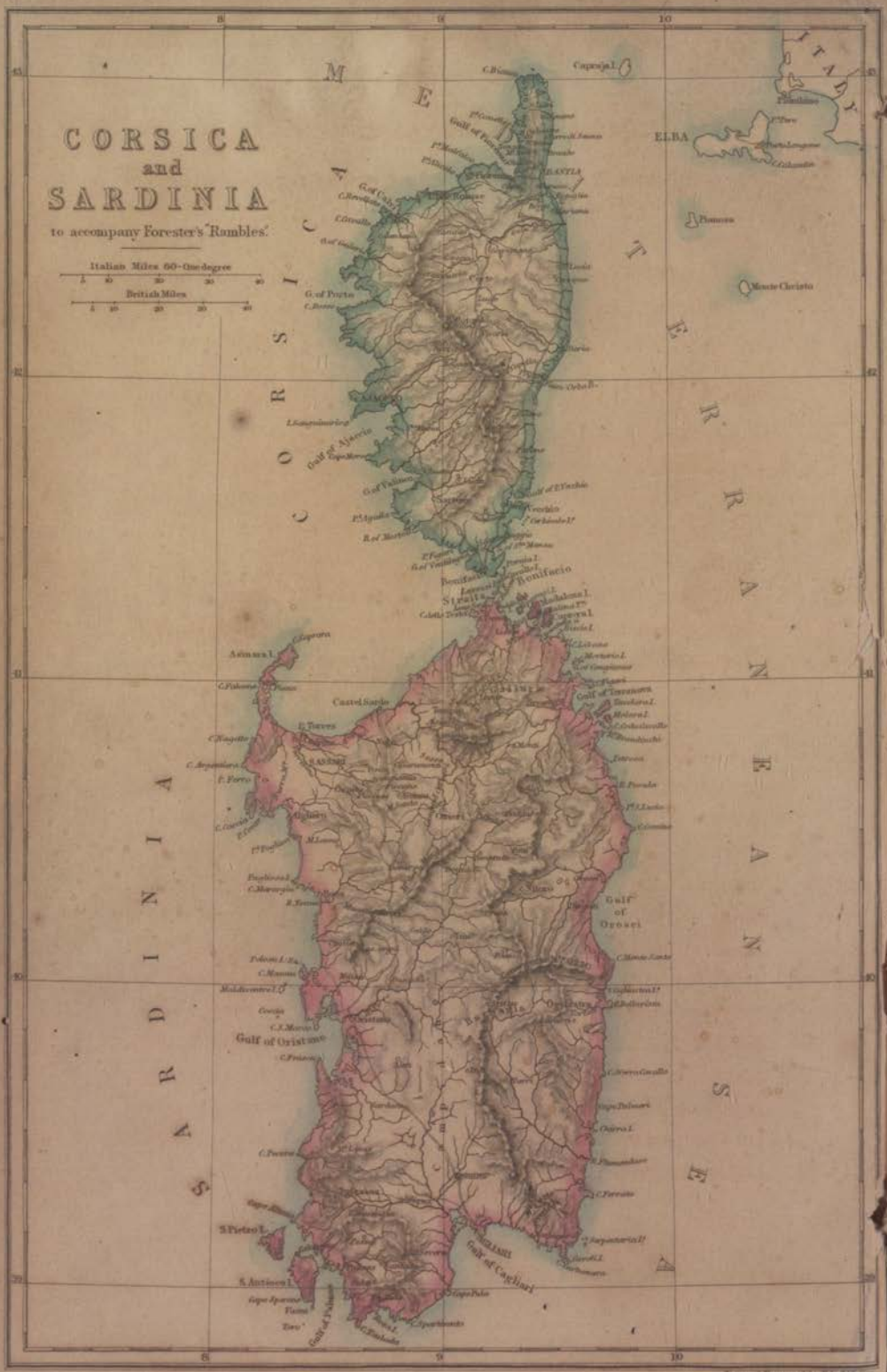

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RAMBLES

IN

CORSICA AND SARDINIA.

CHAPTER I.

Inducements to the Expedition.—Early impressions concerning Corsica.—Plan of the Tour.—Routes to Marseilles.—Meeting there.

It would be difficult to say, and it matters little, what principally led to the selection of two islands in the Mediterranean, not generally supposed to possess any particular attractions for the tourist, as the object for an autumn's expedition with the companion of former rambles. At any rate, we should break fresh ground; and I imagine the hope of shooting *moufflons* was no small inducement to my friend, who had succeeded in the wild sport of hunting reindeer on the high Fjelds of Norway. If, too, his comrade should fail in climbing to the vast solitudes in which the bounding *moufflon* harbours, there were boar hunts in the prospect for him; not such courtly pageants as one sees in the pictures of Velasquez, but more stirring, and in nobler covers.

Should these prove to be false hopes, the enthusiastic sketcher, and the lover of the grand and beautiful in nature, must find ample compensation in the scenery of mountains lifting their snowy peaks from bases washed by the sunny Mediterranean,—mountain systems of a character yet unvisited, and with which we could at least compare those of Norway and Switzerland. This power of comparison is what imparts the most lively interest to travelling; and thus it becomes, for the time, all-engrossing, the eyes and the memory alike employed at every turn on contrasts of form, colour, and clothing.

Not less attractive, to any one desirous of extending his knowledge of human kind, would be the prospect of studying the races inhabiting islands as yet unknown to him. The oldest writer of travels, bringing on the stage his hero-wanderer along the shores of the Mediterranean, gives the finishing touch to his character in two significant words, *νόον ἐγνῶ.** Not only did he "visit the abodes of many people," but he "studied their Νοῦς;" all that the term involves of its impress on character, habits, and institutions was keenly investigated by the accomplished navigator. And what studies must be afforded by these singular islanders, who, we were informed, in the centre of the Mediterranean, at the very threshold of civilisation, combined many of the virtues, with more than the ferocity, of barbarous tribes!

My own impressions regarding Corsica were early received. In my younger days, there was the same sort of sympathy with the Corsicans which we now find more noisily, and sometimes absurdly, displayed for the Poles.

* Πολλῶν δ' ἀνθρωπῶν ἴδεν ἄστεα—καὶ νόον ἔγνῶ. Od. i. 3.

I had seen Pascal Paoli, and talked with General Dumouriez about his first campaign against the Corsican mountaineers, of which his recollections were by no means agreeable. Pascal Paoli had found an asylum in England, where he maintained a dignified seclusion, not always imitated by patriot exiles. His memory has almost passed away, and it is quite imaginable that some stump orator may reckon him among the exiled Poles of former days. Pascal Paoli was, however, a truly great man. In my boyish enthusiasm — all "Grecians" are in the heroics about patriots who have fought and struggled for their country's liberty — I compared him with Aristides or Themistocles; the Corsicans were heroes; the country which rudely nursed those brave mountaineers — I had also a touch of sentiment for the sublime and beautiful in nature which a schoolboy does not always get from books, — such a country must be romantic. Should I ever ramble among its mountains, forests, and sunny valleys?

At last, long after the chimera, for such it inevitably was, of Corsican independence had vanished, my cherished hopes have been realised, — with what success will appear in the following pages. I will only say for myself, and I believe my fellow-traveller participates the feeling, a more delightful tour I never made.

Corsica had an ugly reputation for *banditisme*, and Sardinia for a deadly *intempérie;* but we did not attach much importance to such rumours. The enthusiastic traveller disregards danger. If told that there is "a lion in his path," he only goes the more resolutely forward. As for the banditti, we would fraternise with them if they, best knowing the mountain paths, would track the moufflons for us.

The true traveller must "become all things to all men," if he desires to familiarise himself with the habits and characters of other races. Without forgetting that he is an Englishman, he will cast off that self-conceit and cold exclusiveness which make so many of your countrymen ridiculous in the eyes of foreigners, and, adapting himself to the situation, become, if needs be, a bandit in Corsica, a bonder in Norway, drink sour milk without a wry face in a Caffre's kraal, take snuff with his wives — be any thing except a Turk in Turkey; though even there, when he comes to talk the language, he will adopt the eastern custom of taking his pipe, his coffee, and his repose, not chattering, but sententiously uttering his words between whiffs of smoke, which, meanwhile, he *drinks*, as the Turks well express it.

We envy not the man, the T. G. (travelling gent.) of society, whose principal aim in travelling is to gratify a miserable vanity; to be able to boast of crossing or climbing such a mountain; to have to say, "I have been here, I have been there; I have done Bagdad; I have seen the Nile," or such and such a place. The true traveller is unselfish. Though to him it is food, breath, a renewal of life, a fresh existence, to travel, — half his pleasure is to carry home from his wanderings, to an English fireside, a tale of other lands. That happy English home is ever present to his mind, and, with all his enthusiasm, he meets with nothing in his rambles he would exchange for its blessings.

Being strongly recommended to defer our visit to Sardinia until the latest possible period of the autumn, the plan finally laid was to take Corsica in detail from Capo Corso to Bonifaccio, and then cross the straits, as best we

might, there being no regular communication. Having landed in Sardinia, we should continue the tour through that island as long as circumstances permitted; leaving it by one of the Sardinian government's steam-boats which ply between the island and Genoa and so take the route by Turin, over the Mont-Cenis, to Lyons, Paris, and Boulogne.

As these islands lie on the same parallel of longitude (11° 50′ E. nearly cutting the centre of both), by the route thus chalked out, we should make a straight course from north to south, with no considerable deviations, the islands being, as every one knows, in the form of parallelograms of much greater length than breadth.

Marseilles was finally arranged to be our port of embarkation, and the postponement of the visit to Sardinia till November leaving time on our hands, we had ample leisure for the accomplishment of some secondary projects, which brought us into training for the *grand coup*. My friend pushed through the more frequented parts of Switzerland for Zermatt and the Matterhorn. He was much struck by the remarkable contrast of that stupendous obelisk of rock, piercing the clouds, with the vast, but still sublime, expanse of the high Fjelds of snow we had seen in Norway; and the remark applies generally to the grand distinctive features of the two countries. Descending the valley of Aosta, my friend travelled by Genoa and Nice through the Maritime Alps to Marseilles, going on to Avignon with some friends he happened to fall in with on the way;— such meetings with those we know, and sometimes with those we do not know, being among the pleasures of travelling in the more frequented routes. Agreeable acquaintances are made or renewed; perhaps a day or

two is spent in travelling together, with a charm that is very delightful; and you part with the hope of meeting again.

Meanwhile the author, who had been delving in the Norman Chronicles till every castle and abbey through the length and depth of the old Duchy were become familiar names, feeling a strong desire to revisit scenes thus brought fresh to his memory, shouldered his knapsack at Dieppe, and spent a most delightful fortnight in rambling through that fine province.

Many a pleasant story he could tell of wayside greetings and fireside hospitalities among the Norman peasantry. The old soldier of the empire stopped his *camarade*, as something in our *tenue* led him to imagine, asking eager questions about the coming war and the united service, both which seemed to be popular; while market and fair, and the communal school, each in their turn, drew forth amusing companions for the road. But these episodes, and more serious talk of Norman abbeys buried in the depths of forests or girded round by the winding Seine — rich in memories of the past, but ruins all — and of Norman churches and cathedrals, in all their ancient grandeur, or well restored, are beside the present purpose.

Hastening southward by *diligence* and *chemin-de-fer*, the first vineyards appeared between Chartres and Orleans, with an effect much inferior, as it seemed, to that produced by the orchards of Normandy, loaded as they were with ruddy fruit; but this may be the prejudice of a native of the West of England. From Lyons, one of the long narrow steamboats afforded a most agreeable passage down the stream of the rapid Rhone to Avignon. The autumn rains, which sometimes caused a weary march through

the byroads of Normandy, had cooled the air, freshened vegetation, and made travelling in the south of France pleasant. While journeying on, every hour and every league bringing me nearer to the intended meeting, it was natural to feel some anxiety lest in such great distances to be traversed, with little or no intermediate communication, something might go wrong, and our plans, however well laid, be delayed or frustrated. The last stage of the journey commenced — should I be first at the rendezvous, or was my companion for the future waiting my arrival?

MARSEILLES FROM THE RAILWAY.

At last, after spending the warm noon of an unclouded day amongst the noble ruins of Arles, the train landed me at the station at Marseilles, and my friend was on the platform. The pleasure of casual meetings *en route* has been just adverted to. How joyous was that of two travellers, wanderers together in times gone by, who now met so far from home, after their separate courses, with a fresh field opening before them! — the recognition, doubt and uncertainty vanishing, the glorious chat, — all this the warm-hearted reader will easily imagine.

CHAP. II.

Marseilles. — Café de l'Orient. — Cannebière and Port. — Sail to the Islands in the Gulf. — The Château d'If and Count de Monte-Cristo. — A sudden Squall.

We met then at Marseilles in the second week of October, punctual to the appointed day. Our several lines of route had well converged. Want of companionship was the only drawback on the pleasure they had afforded; but they were only preludes to the joint undertaking on which we now entered. Each recounted his past adventures, and measures were concerted for the future.

Steamboats leave Marseilles three times every week for Corsica; — I like to be particular, especially when one gets beyond Murray's beat. One of these boats calls at Bastia on its way to Leghorn; the others make each a voyage direct to Calvi, or l'Isle de Rousse, and Ajaccio.

It suited us best to land at Bastia, but we were detained three days at Marseilles waiting for the boat. That also happened to suit us. We had hitherto travelled in the lightest possible marching order, and some heavier baggage, containing equipments for our expedition in the islands, had not yet turned up. Knapsack tours are not the style beyond the Alps. In the south and east, all above the lowest grade ride. It is so in Corsica; still more in Sardinia,—where all is eastern. We trudged on foot sometimes in Corsica, to get into the country, and

should have been considered mad; but, as Englishmen, we were only eccentric. We waited then for our baggage, which contained, among other things, English saddles,—a great luxury. My companion thought it a professional duty to reconnoitre the fortifications of Toulon. By travelling in the night, going and returning, he contrived to get a clear day for the purpose.

Marseilles had interest enough to occupy my attention during his absence. Being the great *entrepôt* of commerce, and centre of communication, in the Mediterranean, all the races dwelling on its shores, and many others, are represented there.

"Let us go to the *Grand Café*,"—I think it is called *Café de l'Orient*—said my companion, the evening we met.

Any one who has merely visited Paris may imagine the brilliance of this vast *salon*, the lights reflected on a hundred mirrors. But where else than at Marseilles could be found such an assemblage as now crowded it?

See that Turk, with the magnificent beard. What yards of snowy gauze-like cambric, with gold-embroidered ends, are wound in graceful folds round the fez, contrasting with the dark mahogany colour of his sun-burnt brow. And what a rich crimson caftan! Perhaps he is from Tunis or Barbary. He sits alone, smoking, with eyes half-closed, grave and taciturn.

They must be Greeks,—those two figures in dark-flowing robes. They too wear the red fez. Mark the neat moustache, the clean chiselled outline of their features, the active eye. They are eagerly conversing over that round marble table while they sip their coffee. Their talk must be of the corn markets. Now is their opportunity, as the

harvest in France has failed. And see that man with the olive complexion, keen features, and ringlets of black hair and pendent ear-rings under his dark *barrette*. He may be the *padróne* of some felucca from Leghorn or Naples. Beside him is a Spaniard. He, too, seems a seafaring man; and no felucca-rigged vessels in the Mediterranean are smarter, finer-looking craft than the Spanish.

There are plenty of Arabs, swarthy, high-cheeked-boned, keen-eyed fellows, in snowy bournouses, with hair and moustache of almost unnatural blackness. French officers of every arm in the service are grouped round the tables, drinking *eau-sucré* and playing at dominoes or cards, or lounge on the sofas reading the gazettes. The *garçons* in scarlet tunics, relieved by their white turbans and cambric trowsers, are hurrying to and fro at the call of the motley guests.

"Those two gentlemen just entering are Americans, not of the Yankee type, with free and easy air, and tall lanky forms. I made their acquaintance in the steam-boat down the Rhone. They are men of great intelligence, perfect *savoir-vivre*, and calm dignity of manner, patrician citizens of a republic. One of them wore his plaid as gracefully as a toga. I set him down for a senator from one of the Southern states."

"I have seen no English here," said my companion. Next day he met his friend Captain H—— returning on leave from Malta to England. Marseilles is on the highway to all the East, and on the arrival or departure of the packets connected with the "Overland Route" there must be a strong muster of our countrymen, and women too.

Turning out of the shady avenue of the Corso on a sultry afternoon, I sauntered down the *Rue de la Canne-*

bière towards the port. It was the busiest part of the day, for there seemed to be no idle time for the *siesta* here. The streets and quays were thronged with people of the same varieties of race we had seen in the *café;* most of them, of course, of an inferior class. There can be no mistaking that wild-looking creature, bare-legged, and in a white bournouse, who is staring with curious eyes at the splendid array of jewellery and plate displayed to his eager gaze in that shop window. Again he pauses before that elegant assortment of silks and shawls. What tales of European luxury will the child of the desert carry back to the tents of the Bedouins!

I found the port crowded with ships of all nations, the quays encumbered with piles of *barriques* and mountains of Egyptian wheat discharged in bulk. What blinding dust as they shovel it up! What a suffocating heat! What smells in this hollow trough which receives the filth of all the town! How curiously names on the sterns of vessels, and *annonces* over the shops of *traiteurs* and ship-chandlers, in very readable Greek, carry the mind back to the Phocæan founders of this great emporium of commerce!

It was a cooler walk along the *Rue de Rome*, and by the *Marché-aux-Capucins*, gay with fruits and flowers, to the Museum library, in search of books relating to Corsica. There was some difficulty in discovering it. Literature and science do not appear to be much in vogue in this seat of commerce. The Museum was closed, the *custode* absent, but a good-humoured porter allowed me a stranger's privilege, and took me into the library; giving me also some details of Corsican roads from his personal knowledge. The only book I discovered was Vallery's Travels.

I made a few extracts, and found no reason to desire more. Few foreigners write travels in a style suited to the English taste. They are at home among cities, and galleries, and works of art, but have little real feeling for natural objects, and ill disguise it by pompous phrases, glitter, and sentiment.

"Let us take a boat and sail over to the islands lying off the harbour," said my fellow-traveller one afternoon.

"With all my heart."

ISLETS OFF MARSEILLES.

These islets, most of them mere rocks, form a sort of sheltered strait, or roadstead, of which the island of Rion, with Cape Morgion on the mainland opposite, are the extreme points. Pomègue and Ratoneau are connected by a breakwater.

"*Garçon*, put a roast fowl and some *pâtés*, with a loaf of bread and a bottle of Bordeaux, into a *corbeille* and send it down to the port."

We bought some grapes as we went along. There are landing-stairs at the upper end of the harbour, where pleasure-boats lie. We stepped into one, and were rowed down in a narrow channel between four or five tiers of ships, loading and unloading at the quays on each side. An arm of the Mediterranean, a thousand yards long,

forms a noble harbour; but, foul, black, and stagnant, how different were its waters from the bright sea without! After passing the forts defending the narrow entrance, we hoisted sail. On the right was the new harbour of *La Joliette*, connected with the old port by a canal. At present it did not appear to be much frequented, but, during the war in the East, both scarcely sufficed for the vast flotilla employed in conveying troops and stores. It must be difficult for any one who has not witnessed it to conceive the scene Marseilles then presented.

We now discussed the contents of our hamper with great *goût*, the boatman occasionally pulling an oar as the wind was scant. But we had sufficiently receded from the shore to command a view of the basin in which Marseilles stands, and the amphitheatre of hills surrounding it, studded with the country-houses of the citizens; small cottages, called *bastides*, thousands of which spot the slopes of the hills like white specks.

High upon a rocky summit stands the chapel of *Notre-Dame-de-la-Garde*, held in great reverence, and much resorted to, by mariners and fishermen; the walls and roof being hung with votive offerings, commemorating deliverances from shipwreck and other ills to which mariner-flesh is heir.

Seaward lay the islands for which we were bound, but without any immediate prospect of reaching them, as the wind died away. It was pleasant enough to lie listlessly floating on the blue Mediterranean, with such charming views of the coast and the islands, and the picturesque craft in every direction becalmed like our own skiff: but we had another object in our evening's excursion; so, lowering the lateen sail, my companion took one of the oars,

and the boatman, reinforced by a strong and steady stroke, pulling with a will, we soon landed at the foot of the black and frowning rock, crowned on the summit by the square massive donjon of the *Château d'If*.

The whole circuit of the cliffs, containing an area of, perhaps, two acres, is surrounded by fortifications. Climbing some rocky steps, we waited in the guardroom till the *concièrge* brought the keys of the castle. It was formerly used as a state prison; and the vaulted passages, echoing to the clang of keys and bolts, and deep and gloomy dungeons, from which air and light were almost excluded by the thick walls, reminded one of the unhappy wretches,

CHÂTEAU D'IF.

victims of despotic or revolutionary tyranny, who had been immured there without trial and without hope. The island now serves as a depôt for recruits to fill up the

regiments serving in Algiers; and some of the larger apartments of the château are used as a caserne.

But the *Château d'If* is probably best known to many of my readers as connected with a remarkable incident in the adventures of the Count de Monte-Cristo, the hero of the celebrated novel of Alexandre Dumas. The story is shortly this:

Dantès (the count) being thrown into one of the dungeons, remains in hopeless captivity for a great number of years. In the end, by working his way through the massive walls, he establishes a communication with the cell of another prisoner, who was in a still more deplorable condition. His fellow-prisoner dies, and Dantès effects his escape by contriving to insert himself in the sack in which the corpse of his friend was deposited; having first dressed the body in his own clothes, and placed it in his bed, to deceive the gaolers. In the dead of the night the sack is thrown into the sea from the castle walls, and Dantès sinks with a thirty-two-pound shot fastened to his feet. He cuts the cord with a knife he had secreted, and, disengaged from the sack, rises to the surface and swims to a neighbouring island.

We were looking over the battlements towards these islands. One of them is covered by a vast lazzeretto, — a place, for the time, only a few degrees worse than the prison. The isles of Ratoneau and Pomègue lay nearest. Farther off was Lémaire, to which Dantès is described as swimming. They are all mere rocky islets washed by the sea, the group being very picturesque.

"*Mon ami*," said I, pointing to the isle of Lémaire, "do you think you could do what the count is represented to have done."

"What! swim from hence to that island? I would try, if I was shut up in this horrid place, and had the chance."

The distance I reckoned to be about three miles; and as my friend has since swum across the Bosphorus, where the current is strong, he would probably have found no difficulty in that part of the affair.

"But how about cutting the cord to get rid of the thirty-two-pound shot, and extricating yourself from the sack?"

"*Ça dépend!* All this is not impossible for a strong man in good health; for a prisoner, exhausted by fourteen years' captivity in a dungeon — *c'est autre chose.* Have you read the book?"

"Not much of it; I tried, but could not get on. That class of works is by no means to my taste."

"French literature of this school is, I admit, bad for the weak: it is pastime to the strong, and serves to wile away an idle hour. This work exhibits great genius, and a powerful imagination."

"So, indeed, it seems; but may not the *vraisemblable* be preserved even in works of fiction? Let us have a story which, *se non è vero, è ben trovato.* Writers of this school, my dear fellow, create, or pander to, a vicious taste."

"In a play or novel, I grant you, the plot, characters, and incidents, in order to enlist our sympathies, should be true to nature and real life. But who looks for this in a romance? such works are not read for profit, and the boldest flights of fancy, and some extravagance, are fairly admissible."

"*Ah, mon cher*, my age is double yours, and that makes a great difference in our views on such subjects."

The recruits flocked round us, asking for *eau-de-vie*. Many of them were Italians, deserters from the armies in Lombardy, Piedmont, and the Papal states, glad to change their service for better pay and treatment under the French flag, even on the burning plains of Africa. Perhaps some of them were drafted into that "foreign legion" which rivalled the Zouaves in the Crimea, — *âmes perdus*, the most reckless before the enemy, the most licentious in the camp. These were merry fellows, launching witty shafts against Austrians, Pope, and Cardinals, — *maladetti tutti*, and good-humoured gibes at their comrade, who, standing in an embrasure, bent his back with laudable patience to the right angle for an easel, while my friend was making sketches of the rocky islets and lateen-sail vessels reflected on the mirror-like sea, or of the amphitheatre of mountains at the foot of which Marseilles stands.

MARSEILLES FROM THE CHÂTEAU D'IF.

Others, leaning over the battlements, whiled away the listless evening hours, watching fishermen drawing the seine at the foot of the rocks.

We pulled round to the cove and watched them too; a

very different set of fellows from the *malbigatti* stationed above. Fine, athletic, muscular men, their heads bare, except that a few wore the red cap so common in the Mediterranean,—in woollen shirts, with naked feet planted on the slippery rocks, they were hauling up and coiling the rope, singing cheerily.

The wind had shifted some points while we were on the island, and it now freshened to a stiff breeze,—one of those sudden squalls for which these seas are remarkable. The craft, which an hour before lay sleeping on the waters, had caught the breeze. A brigantine came dashing up the straits under all sail, her topgallants still set, though the poles quivered; and smaller craft, with their long, pointed sails, like sea-fowl with expanded wings, were crossing in all directions on their several tacks, making for the harbour or inlets along the coast.

The sea was already lashed into foam, and tiny waves broke on the rocks. Loud and hoarse rung the fishermen's voices as they hauled away to save their nets. It was time for us to make for the port. A few strokes shoved the boat from under the lee of the island; the oars were shipped, and the lateen sail run up by all hands. Hauling close to the wind, my friend seized the tiller: it was doubtful if we could make the harbour, which the little craft, struggling with the breeze, just headed; the towers of St. Victor being the point of sight in the increasing haze.

"*Comme les Anglais font des braves marins,*" said the *padróne*, as he stood by the halyards, looking out ahead, after all was made snug.

We were, indeed, in our element. The sudden squall

had stirred our blood. Many such rough cruises we had shared together in old times.

The boat flew through the water, which roared and broke over the bows. "It will be a short run," said the steersman, "if the wind holds on."

"*Port, monsieur, port!*" cried the *padróne*, who had learnt some English nautical phrases.

But it would not do. Approaching the land, the wind veered and headed us.

"We must make a short tack to gain the harbour."

"*Je l'ai prévu,*" said the *padróne.*

"About" it was. She stayed beautifully, even under the single sail, and in a trice was lying well upon the other tack, as we stood out to sea. In five minutes we went about again, fetching under the stern of a felucca, also beating into the port; perhaps from Algiers or the Spanish coast. It was now a dead race with the felucca, which had forged ahead while we were in stays.

"*Nous gagnerons, j'en gagerais une bouteille de vin!*" cried the *padróne*, much excited, for he was proud of his boat.

"*Vous l'aurez, toutefois, pour boire à la santé de vos camarades Anglais.*"

Again we flew through the water, making a straight course for the harbour. The felucca had much the advantage of us in breadth of canvas and her high-peaked sails; but being heavily laden, she was deep in the water. As it turned out, we did not overhaul her till just before she lowered her foresail at the *consigne* office, to wait for her *permis d'entrer*, when we shot ahead right into the port.

We made out the evening at the theatre, well entertained

by a *petite comédie.* "One is sure to be amused," said my companion; "and it is good practice. It helps to get up one's French."

"*Monsieur ne manque que d'être plus habitué,*" as it is politely suggested when one is at a loss for a phrase.

CHAP. III.

Embark for Corsica.—Coast of France and Italy.—Toulon.—Hyères Islands, Frejus, &c. — A Stormy night. — Crossing the Tuscan Sea.

ONCE more we are at the water stairs. A stout boat is ready to convey us with our baggage to *L'Industrie*, one of Messrs. Vallery's fine steam-boats, in turn for Bastia. Just as we are pushing off, a carriage drives to the quay, with a niece of General the Count di Rivarola, formerly in the British service. She is returning to Corsica. We do the civil, spread plaids, and place her in the stern sheets; and she is very agreeable.

It is Sunday morning. The bells of the old church of St. Victor are ringing at early mass. The ships in the port have hoisted their colours. There is our dear, time-honoured jack, "the flag that has braved," &c., as we say on all occasions; and the stars and stripes, the crescent and star, and the towers of Castille; with crosses of all shapes and colours, in as great variety as the costumes we saw in the *café*. The tricolor floated on the forts of St. Jean and St. Nicholas, as well as on French craft of all descriptions.

All was gay, but not more joyous than our own buoyant spirits. Time had been spent pleasantly enough at Marseilles, but it was a delay; and there is nothing an Englishman hates more than delays in travelling. Thwarted in

his humour, he becomes quite childish, and frets and chafes more at having to wait two or three days for a steamboat than at any other hindrance I know. Now, when *L'Industrie*, with her ensign at the peak, had, somehow or other, with a din of unutterable cries in maritime French, been extricated from the dense tiers of vessels along the quay, and hauling out of the harbour, we were at last fairly on the high road to Corsica, never did the sun appear to shine more brightly; the Mediterranean looked more blue than any blue one had seen before, there was a ripple from the fresh breeze, the waves sparkled, and seemed positively to laugh and partake of our joy.

We hardly cared to speculate on our fellow-passengers, as one is apt to do when there is nothing else to engross the thoughts; and yet there were some among them we should wish to sketch. Besides French officers joining their regiments in the island, there was one, a Corsican, who had served in Algeria, returning home on sick leave. It was to be feared that it had come too late, for the poor invalid was so feeble, worn, and emaciated that it seemed his native country could offer him nothing but a grave. There was a Corsican priest on board, a pleasant, well-informed man, who met our advances to an acquaintance with great readiness, and was delighted with our proposed visit to his island. Some Corsican gentlemen, a lady or two, and commercial men *en route* for Leghorn, completed the party. We seemed to be the only English. I was mistaken.

"After all, there is a countryman of ours on board," I said, pointing to a pair of broad shoulders, disappearing under the companion-hatch. I caught sight of him just now; a fine, hale man, rather advanced in years, with a

fair complexion, ruddy, and a profusion of grey hair. He wears a suit of drab; very plain, but well turned out.

"Unmistakeably English, as you say; it may be pleasant. I wonder we did not make him out before among these sallow-faced and rather dirty-looking gentry in green and sky-blue trousers."

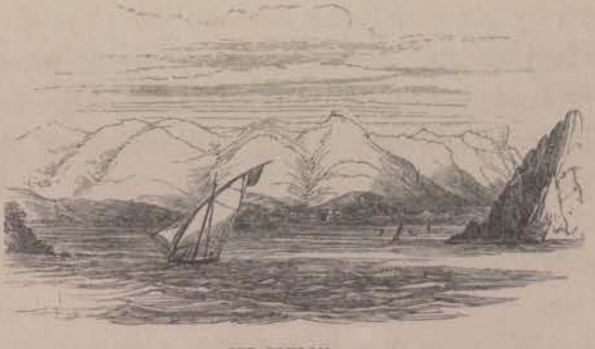
We were soon abreast of the group of rocky islets off the harbour, passing close under the *Château d'If*. The sea was smooth, the sky unclouded, but a gentle breeze deliciously tempered the heat, and vessels of every description — square-rigged ships, and coasting feluccas and xebecs — on their different courses, gave life to the scene. Thus pleasantly we ran along the French coast, here much indented and swelling into rocky hills of considerable elevation.

FRENCH COAST OFF CIOTAT.

We had an excellent *déjeûner*, for which we were quite ready, having only taken the usual early cup of coffee.

The genial influence of this meal had the effect of putting us on the best footing with our fellow-voyagers. Pacing the deck afterwards with the Corsican priest, we were joined by the stout Englishman. Observing our disappointment at hearing we should be probably baulked of shooting in Corsica, he expressed a hope that we would extend our excursion to Tuscany, where, he was good enough to say, he would show us sport. He had been settled there many years, and was now returning to his family by way of Leghorn. Under a somewhat homely exterior, which had puzzled us at first as to his position, we found our new acquaintance to be a man of refined taste, great simplicity, as well as urbanity, of manners, and keenly alive to the beautiful in nature and art. Such a specimen of the hearty old English gentleman, unchanged — I was about to say uncontaminated — by long residence abroad, it has been rarely my lot to meet with.

On rounding a projecting headland, we peeped into the mouth of Toulon harbour, and every eye and glass were



OFF TOULON.

directed to the heights crowned with forts, and the bold mountain masses towering above them.

Presently, we were threading the channel between the main land and the Hyères Islands. They appeared to us a paradise of verdure, on which the eye, weary of gazing at the bare and furrowed mountain-sides bounding this coast, rested with delight. One imagined orange groves and myrtle bowers, impervious to the summer's sun and sheltered by the lofty ridges from the northern blasts — all this verdure fringing the edge of a bright and tideless sea. Elsewhere, except rarely in the hollows, the mountain ranges extending along this coast exhibit no signs of vegetation; the whole mass appearing, with the sun full on them, not only scorched but actually burnt to the colour of kiln-dried bricks.

All the afternoon we continued running at the steamer's full speed along the shores of France and Italy. Notwithstanding their arid and sterile aspect, nothing can be finer than the mountain ranges which bound this coast, as every one who has crossed them in travelling from Nice well knows. Glimpses, too, successively of Frejus, Cannes, and Nice, more or less distant, as, crossing the Gulf of Genoa, we gradually increased our distance from the shore, together with a capital dinner, were pleasant interludes to the grand spectacle of Alps piled on Alps in endless succession, and glowing a fiery red, which all the waters over which we flew — deep, dark, or azure — could not quench.

Towards evening there were evident tokens in the sky, on the water, and in the vessel's motion, of a change of weather. We were threatened with a stormy night; and as we now began to lose the shelter of the land, holding a course somewhat to the S.E. in order to round the northern point of Corsica, there was no reason to regret that the

passage across the Tuscan sea would be performed while we were in our berths.

However, we walked the deck long after the other passengers had gone below; enjoying the fresh breeze, though it was no soft zephyr wafting sweet odours from the Ausonian shore. It is a sublime thing to stand on the poop of a good ship when she is surging through the waves at ten knots an hour in utter darkness, whether impelled by wind or steam; especially when the elements are in strife. Nothing can give a higher idea of the power of man to control them. With no horizon, not a star visible in the vault above, and only the white curl on the crest of the boiling waves, glimmering in our wake, on — on, we rush, the ship dipping and rising over the long swells, and dashing floods of water and clouds of spray from her bows.

But whither are we driving through these dark waters, and this impenetrable, and seemingly boundless, gloom? The eye rests on the light in the binnacle. We stoop to examine the compass; the card marks S.S.E. Imagination expands the dark horizon. It is not boundless: the island mountain-tops loom in the distance. They beckon us on; we realise them now; at dawn the grey peaks of Cape Corso will be unveiled; we shall dream of them to-night.

One of the watch struck the hour on the bell. "It is ten o'clock; let us turn in." There is an inviting glimmer through the cabin skylights. We are better off in this floating hotel than has often been our lot, baffling with storm and tempest, benighted, weary, cold and wet, in rough roads, forest or desert waste, with dubious hopes of shelter and comfort at the end of our march.

We paused for a moment, leaning over the brass rail

which protected the quarter deck. Below, on the main deck, a number of French soldiers, wrapped in their grey coats, were huddled together, cowering under the bulwarks, or wherever they could find shelter from the bitter night wind.

The cabin lamps shed a cheerful light, reflected by the highly-polished furniture and fittings. All the passengers were in their berths. We had chosen ours near the door for fresher air. My companion climbed to his cot in the upper tier, above mine.

"If you wake first, call me at daylight. We shall be off the coast of Corsica. *Felicissima notte!*"

CHAP. IV.

Coast of Capo Corso.—Peculiarity of Scenery.—Verdure, and Mountain Villages.—Il Torre di Seneca.—Land at Bastia.

THE voyage from Marseilles to Bastia is performed, under favourable circumstances, in eighteen hours; but we had only just made the extreme northern point of Corsica when I was hastily roused, at six o'clock, from a blissful state of unconsciousness of the gale of wind and rough sea which had retarded our progress during the night.

Hurrying on deck, the first objects which met the eye were a rocky islet with a lighthouse on a projecting point, and then it rested on the glorious mountains of Capo Corso, lifting their grey summits to the clouds, and stretching away to the southward in endless variety of outline. We were abreast of the rocky island of Capraja; on the other hand lay Elba, with its mountain peaks; Pianosa and Monte-Cristo rose out of the Tuscan sea further on. Behind these picturesque islands, the distant range of the Apennines hung like a cloud in the horizon. The sun rose over them in unclouded glory, no trace being left of the night-storm, but a fresh breeze, and the heaving and swelling of the deep waters.

Ranging along the eastern coast of Capo Corso, at a short distance from the shore, with the early light now thrown

upon it, the natural features of the country — groups of houses, villages, and even single buildings of a marked character — were distinctly visible. We were not long in discovering that Corsican scenery is of a peculiar and highly interesting character.

The infinite variety existing in all the Creator's works is remarkably exhibited in the physical aspect of different countries, though the landscape be formed of the same materials, whether mountains, forests, wood, water, and extended plains, or a composition of all or any of these features on a greater or less scale. The change is sometimes very abrupt. Thus, the character of Sardinian scenery is essentially different from the Corsican, notwithstanding the two islands are only separated by a strait twenty miles broad. Climate, atmosphere, geological formation, and vegetable growth, all contribute to this variety. The impress given to the face of nature by the hand of man, whether by cultivation, or in the forms, and, as we shall presently see, the position, of the various buildings which betoken his presence, give, of course, in a secondary degree, a difference of character to the landscape.

Remarks of this kind occurred in a conversation with our stout English friend and my fellow-traveller, while they were sketching the coast of Capo Corso from the deck of the *Industrie*. Trite as they may appear, it is surprising how little even many persons who have travelled are alive to such distinctions. What more natural than to say, "I have seen Alpine scenery in Switzerland; why should I encounter the difficulties of a northern tour to witness the same thing on a smaller scale in Norway? What can the islands in the Tuscan sea have to offer

essentially different from Italian scenery with which I am already familiar ?

Only a practised eye can make the discrimination, and it requires some knowledge of physical geography, and the vegetable kingdom, to be able to analyse causes producing these diversified effects. Every class of rock, every species of tree, the various elevations of the surface of the globe, and the plants which clothe its different regions, have each their own forms and characteristics ; and, of course, a landscape, being an aggregate of these several parts, ought to reflect the varieties of the materials composing it. An artist must have carefully studied from nature to have acquired a nice perception of these varied effects, and even should he be able to grasp the result, he may not succeed in transferring it to his sketch. Far less can words convey an adequate idea of the varied effects of natural scenery ; so that one does not wonder when the reader complains of the sameness of the representation.

In the present instance, were there pictured to his imagination the distant peaks of Elba on the one hand, and on the other the long mountain ranges of Capo Corso, bathed in purple light, as the sun rose in the eastern horizon, the grey cliffs of rocks and promontories bordering the coast, contrasted with the verdure of the valleys and lower elevations, vineyards and olive grounds on the hill-sides, and the landscape dotted with villages, churches, and ancient towers, we should doubtless have a very charming sketch, but it would not convey a distinct idea of the peculiarities of Corsican scenery.

What struck us most, independently of the general effect, was the extraordinary verdure and exuberance of the vegetation which overspread the surface of the country

far up the mountain sides, not only as contrasted with the sterile aspect of the coasts of the continent we had just left, but as being, in itself, different from anything which had before fallen under our observation in other countries, whether forest, underwood, or grassy slope. For the moment, we were unable to conjecture of what it consisted; but we had not long set foot on shore before we were at no loss to account for our admiration of this singular feature in Corsican, and in this particular, also, of Sardinian scenery.

Not to dwell now on the peculiar character of the mountain ranges of Corsica, I will only mention one other peculiarity in the landscape which strikes the eye throughout the island, but is nowhere more remarkable than in the views presented as we ranged along the coast of Capo Corso. As the former instance belongs to the department of physical geography, this comes under the class of effects produced by the works of man. The peculiarity consists in the villages being all placed at high elevations. They are seen perched far up the mountain sides, straggling along the scarp of a narrow terrace, or crowded together on the platform of some projecting spur; churches, convents, towers, and hamlets crowning the peaked summits of lower eminences almost equally inaccessible. The only extensive plains in the island are so insalubrious as to be almost uninhabitable, and this has been their character from the time the island was first colonised. For this reason, probably, in some measure, but more especially for defence, in the hostilities to which the island has been exposed from foreign invaders during many ages, as well as by internal feuds hardly yet extinct, nearly the whole population is collected in the elevated villages or *paese*

forming this singular and picturesque feature in Corsican scenery. They are visible from a great distance, and sometimes ten or a dozen of them are in sight at one time.

Capo Corso is not, as might be supposed, a mere cape or headland, but a narrow peninsula, containing a number of villages, and washed on both sides by the Tuscan sea; being about twenty-five miles long, though only from five to ten miles broad. Nearly the whole area is occupied by a continuation of the central chain which traverses the island from north to south. The average height of the range through Capo Corso, where it is called *La Serra*, does not exceed 1500 feet above the level of the sea, but it swells into lofty peaks; the highest, *Monte Stella*, between Brando and Nonza, rising 5180 feet above the shore of the Mediterranean.

From the central chain spurs branch off to the sea on both coasts, forming narrow valleys at the base and in the gorges of the mountains, of which the principal on the eastern side are Lota, Cagnano, and Luri; the last-named being the most fertile and picturesque, as well as the largest of these mountain valleys, though only six miles long and three wide. On the western side lie the valleys of Olmeta, Olcani, and Ogliastro; Olmeta being the largest. The valleys are watered by mountain torrents, often diverted to irrigate the lands under tillage, as well as gardens and vine and olive plantations. Each *paese* has its small tract of more fertile land, marked by a deeper verdure, where the valleys open out and the streams discharge their waters into the Mediterranean. At this point, called the *Marino*, there is generally a little port, with a hamlet inhabited by a hardy race of sailors engaged in the traffic

ERSA, CAPO CORSO.

carried on coastwise between the villages of the interior and the seaports.

This mountainous district contains a considerable population, and the inhabitants are distinguished for their industry and economy. They live in much comfort on the produce obtained by persevering labour from the small portions of cultivated soil. Numerous flocks of sheep are herded on the vast wastes overhanging the valleys. The olive and vine flourish, and extensive chestnut woods supply at some seasons the staple diet of the poorer classes. The slopes of the hills about the villages are converted into gardens and orchards, in which we find figs, peaches, apples, pears, — with oranges and lemons in the more sheltered spots. The wines are in general sound, and we found them excellent where special care had been bestowed on the manufacture.

The Corsicans are generally indolent, but it is said that there are no less than a hundred families in the mountainous province of Capo Corso who are considered rich, some of them wealthy; and all these owe their improved fortunes to the enterprising spirit of some relative who left it poor, and after years of toil in Mexico, in Brazil, or some other part of South America, returned with his savings to his native village.

One valley after another opened as the steamer ran down the coast, each with its *Marino* distinguished by a fresher verdure, and its cluster of white houses on the beach. The night mists still filled the hollows, and villages and hamlets hung like cloud-wreaths on the mountain-sides and the summits of the hills; the most inaccessible of which were crowned with ruins of castles and towers.

Tradition asserts that one of these towers was the prison of Seneca the Philosopher. *Il Torre di Seneca*, as it is called, stands on an escarped pinnacle of rock, terminating one of the loftiest of the detached sugar-loaf hills.

IL TORRE DI SENECA.

Seneca spent seven years in exile, having been banished to Corsica by the emperor Claudius, on suspicion of an illicit intercourse with the profligate Julia. The islands in the Tuscan sea were the Tasmania of the Roman empire, places of transportation for political offenders, and those who fell under the imperial frown — which was the same thing. Some smaller islands off the Italian coast, Procidâ, Ischia, &c., served the same purpose. *Relegatio ad insulam* was the legal phrase for this punishment. Augustus banished his grandson Agrippa

to the desolate island of *Planosa*, the Pianosa mentioned just before in connection with Elba. There he was strangled by order of Tiberius.

In some of his Epigrams, and the Books *de Consolatione*, composed during his exile, Seneca paints the country and the climate in the darkest colours. There is no doubt but these islands, though in sight of the coast of Italy, appeared to the polished Romans as barbarous and full of horrors as our penal settlements at the antipodes were considered long after their first occupation; so that the picture of Corsica, drawn by Seneca, may have been much exaggerated by his distempered and splenetic state of mind. The probability is, that he resided during his exile at one of the Roman colonies on the eastern coast, Aleria or Mariana. What is called the *Torre di Seneca* is the ruin of a stronghold or watch-tower of the middle ages; and it is not likely that the spot was occupied by the Romans at any period of their dominion in Corsica, their possessions consisting only of the two colonies, and some harbours on the coast.

But those lonely towers standing close to the shore, which we see from time to time as we coast along — massive, round, and grey with lichens as the rocks at their base; what do their ruins tell of times past? Were they a chain of forts for the defence of the coast against Saracen, or other invaders, in the middle ages? They appear too small to hold a garrison, and too insulated for mutual support. More probably they were watch-towers, from which signals were made when the vessels of the corsairs hovered on the coast, that the inhabitants might betake themselves, with their cattle and goods, to the fortified villages and castles on the hills. We are told that,

at the beginning of the eighteenth century, there were fifteen of these towers on the north coast of the island, and eighty-five in its whole circuit; but many of them are now fallen to ruin.

At length, Bastia appeared in sight, rising in an amphitheatre to a ridge studded with villas; the houses of the old town being crowded about the port. Sweeping round the mole, we found ourselves in a diminutive harbour, among vessels of small burthen. This basin is surrounded on three sides by tall gloomy buildings, of the roughest construction, piled up, tier above tier, to a great height. A man-of-war's boat shoves off from the shore in good style, and lands the Count's niece with due honours. Other boats come alongside the steamer, and all is confusion.

"Did you see the meeting between the two Corsican brothers — the sallow, fever-worn soldier from Algiers, our poor fellow-traveller, and the hearty mountaineer?"

"No; I was paying my last *devoirs* to *madame*."

"The contrast between the two was striking. I shall never forget the way they were laced in each other's arms, and the glance of keen anxiety with which the mountaineer looked into his sick brother's face, marking the ravages which time and disease had worked on those much-loved features."

In the air of his mountain-village that brother, we would hope, grew strong again. Perhaps, having rejoined his regiment, his bones are left in the Crimea; perhaps, he again survives, and breathes once more his native air. Who can tell?

Our hale English friend remained on board to pursue the voyage to Leghorn. What a din, what frantic gestures, what a rush of these irascible Corsicans at our

baggage! It is borne off to the custom-house, and undergoes an examination far from rigorous. We mount several flights of steps, leading from one narrow street to another in this old quarter of the town, and are led to an hotel, which had much the air of a second or third-rate Italian *locanda*—lofty and spacious apartments, neither clean nor well arranged; and the *déjeûner* was a sorry affair. *N'importe;* we shall not stay longer in Bastia than is necessary, and we may go further and fare worse. Meanwhile, a battalion of French infantry were on parade, with the band playing in the barrack-yard under our windows. We threw them open to enjoy the fresh breeze and sweeten the room. They commanded a fine view of the coast we had passed, now seen in profile under the effect of a bright sunshine, with the waves washing in wreaths of foam on every jutting point and rock.

CHAP. V.

Bastia.—Territorial Divisions.—Plan of the Rambles.—Hiring Mules.—The Start.

I CANNOT imagine any one's loitering in Bastia longer than he can help. Its only attractions are the sea and the mountain views from the environs; and those are commanded equally well from many points along the coast. What the old town is we have already seen — narrow and crooked streets, with gaunt houses piled up about the port; and there is the old Genoese fortress frowning over it, and the church of St. John, of Pisan architecture, the interior rich in marbles and gilding, but the *façade* below notice as a work of art. A new quarter has been added to the town, higher up, in which there are some handsome houses, particularly in the *Rue de la Traverse.*

In early times a few poor traders from Cardo, a *paese* on the heights, settled at the mouth of a stream which formed here a small harbour. It was their *Marino,* so that Cardo may be said to be in some sort the Fiesole of Bastia. About the close of the fourteenth century, the Genoese built the Donjon, which is still standing, to defend the port, then becoming of importance. From this *bastióne,* the new town derived its name. It was the capital of the island during the Pisan and Genoese occupation, and so continued under the French government till 1811, when the prefecture and general administration of affairs

were transferred to Ajaccio, where also the Council-general of Corsica, now forming a department of France, holds its sessions. Bastia, however, is still the *Quartier-général* of the military in the island, and the seat of the *Cour de Cassation* and *Cour d'Appel*, tribunals exercising superior jurisdiction over all the other courts. It is also the most populous town in Corsica (14,000 souls being the return of the last census), and has by far the largest commerce, exporting olive-oil and wine, fruits and fish; and importing *corn*, groceries, tobacco, and manufactured articles of all kinds.

Bastia was the standing point from which the old division of Corsica into the *di quà* and the *di là dei monti* — the country on this side and the country on the other side of the mountains — was made; the line of intersection commencing at the point of Gargalo, below Aleria, on the eastern coast, and following a range of mountains westward to the *Marino* of Solenzara. The division was by no means equal; the country *di quà*, including the present arrondissements of Bastia, Corte, and Calve, being one-third larger than the *di là*, comprising the arrondissements of Ajaccio and Sartene.

Another ancient division of Corsica was into *pieves*, originally ecclesiastical districts,—and *paeses*, which, I imagine, are equivalent to parishes, including the village and the hamlets belonging to them. A detached farm-house, such as are scattered everywhere in England, is hardly to be seen in Corsica, the inhabitants being gathered in these villages and hamlets, invariably built, as already observed, on elevated points. By what corruption these were called *paeses*, *countries*, one does not understand; but it sounds rather droll to a stranger, when he is told in Corsica, that he may

travel many miles, *senza vedère uno paése*, without seeing a country.

Bastia must, doubtless, from the circumstances mentioned, have good society; but we thought Ajaccio a much pleasanter place, and Corte, in its rudeness, has a nobler aspect than either, and is associated with glorious recollections. We were for escaping the *di quà* of Bastia and the *littorale*, and getting as soon as possible *di là* the mountains, not, however, according to the old political division of the island, but in the sense of crossing the central chain by one of the nearest passes.

The plan we sketched, after consulting our maps, was to cross the Serra by a *col* leading into the valleys in the south-west of Capo Corso, and, after rambling through that district, to descend into the upper valley of the Golo, and pursue it in the direction of Corte, making Ajaccio our next point. There are good highroads throughout the island, with regular *diligences* all the way from Bastia to Bonifaccio; but to avail ourselves of these, taking up our quarters in the towns and making excursions in the neighbourhood, was not to our taste. We proposed, therefore, to hire mules for the expedition, sending our heavier baggage forward to Ajaccio by *voiture*, and retaining only the indispensables for a journey of more than 150 miles, in the course of which not a single decent *albergo* was to be met with, except at Corte.

The horses in Corsica are diminutive and of an inferior breed, mules being almost exclusively employed for draught on the great roads, and as beasts of burthen in the byways and mountain tracks. In Sardinia, on the contrary, though lying so much further south, the mules disappeared, and were replaced by hardy and active horses.

We inquired for mules. There are generally to be found hanging about foreign hotels people ready to undertake anything the traveller may require, little as they may be competent to fulfil their engagements. One of this class presented himself, his appearance by no means prepossessing; but the view he took of our present scheme afforded us some amusement.

"Are you well acquainted with the roads in Corsica?"

"I have had the honour to conduct *signore forestiere* throughout the island from Bastia to Bonifaccio."

"We shall not travel *en voiture*. We require mules for the baggage and riding. Can you supply them?"

"*Ça serait possible, mais, à l'improviste, un peu difficile.*"

"It is indispensable, as we mean to cross the mountains and make a *détour, en route* to Corte by slow stages, resting in the villages."

The man's countenance assumed a rueful expression. He had probably been used to make easy work of it from town to town, and there was evidently a ludicrous struggle between the temptation of a profitable job and his disinclination for rugged roads and a spare diet.

"Are *messieurs* aware that there are no *auberges* in the villages offering accommodations fit for them?"

"It is very possible; that does not occasion us any uneasiness."

"*Les chemins sont affreux.*"

"*N'importe;* we have travelled in worse."

"In some places they are dangerous, absolutely precipitous."

"We shall walk; *en effet*, it is possible we may walk great part of the journey."

That our muleteer could not understand at all: "*la fatigue serait pénible;*" and with true Corsican indolence, he protested against being included in that part of our plan.

"Then you can ride."

So far all objections were dismissed. The banditti had not been mentioned among the lions in our path, but I imagined they were darkly shadowed forth in the guide's picture of horrors; so I put the question to him point blank.

"Are the roads safe in these districts? Are there no bad people (*mauvais gens — cattive genti*) abroad?"

His only reply was a shrug of the shoulders, the foreign substitute for a Burleigh shake of the head; leaving us to infer that we must not make too sure of coming off with a whole skin. Knowing well enough that all apprehensions of that kind were imaginary, we had been only amusing ourselves with him. If there had been any danger, he seemed just the fellow to be in league with the brigands.

All topics of intimidation being now exhausted, our muleteer, with the best grace he could, professed himself ready to comply with our wishes.

The hire demanded for the mules was five francs per day each, exclusive of their keep; and their return journey was to be paid for at the same rate. The latter part of the demand was an imposition, but we had only "Hobson's choice," and made no difficulties.

When would it be our pleasure to depart? As early in the afternoon as possible. "It would be late;" and a last effort was made to induce us to remain at the hotel till the next morning, but we were inexorable.

"Would there be time for us to reach the first village on the road before dark?"—"We might."—"Then we will go. Our baggage will be ready by three o'clock. Be punctual."

We disliked the man, and determined to discharge him at Corte unless things turned out better than we expected. As it happened, we were under his convoy for a much shorter space. We found the Sard *cavallante*, a much finer race, trudging on foot through all the roughest part of the tracks, and perching themselves at the top of a much heavier load of baggage on the pack-horse, when they were tired of walking.

It was a strange "turn out," that, by unusual exertions, appeared at the door within an hour of the time appointed. The mules were no bigger than donkeys.

"*Queste bestie non sono muli; sono dei asini.*"

It was vexatious; but we laughed too much to be seriously angry; the muleteer, too, deprecating our wrath by assuring us that his mules had first-rate qualities for scrambling up and down precipices. So we took it all in good part, and, more amused than annoyed, assisted in contriving to adjust the girths of the English saddles to the poor beasts' wizened sides; and then, declining a march through Coventry with such a cavalcade, walked forward, leaving the guide to load the baggage and follow with the mules.

CHAP. VI.

Leave Bastia. — The Road. — View of Elba, Pianosa, and Monte-Cristo. — The Littorale. *— An Adventure. — The Stagna di Biguglia.*

THE Corsicans are apt to say, that the national roads were the only benefit Napoleon conferred on his native country. Like all his great works of construction, they are worthy of his genius. One of these traverses the whole eastern coast of the island from Bastia, by Cervione and Porto-Vecchio, to Bonifaccio. Another line branches off near Vescovato, about ten miles from Bastia, and following the valley of the Golo, is carried among the mountains to Corte, whence it is continued through a wild and mountainous district to Ajaccio. Similar engineering skill is displayed in its continuation on the western side of the mountains to Sartene, and thence to Bonifaccio, where it also terminates.

On clearing Bastia, we found ourselves on this high road,—a magnificent causeway carried nearly in a straight line for many miles through the plain extending between the sea and the mountains. Orange groves embowering sheltered nooks in the environs of the town, and hedges of the Indian fig (*cactus opuntia*), betokened the warmth of this southern shore; and, as we advanced, the rank growth of vegetation on the flats realised all we had heard of the

teeming richness of the *littorale*. It was hot walking, and the causeway and flats would have been monotonous enough but for the glorious views on either hand.

To the left, the Mediterranean was calmly subsiding from the effects of the gale, its undulations still sparkling in the sunbeams. Far within the horizon was the group of islands which lend a charm to all this coast, and are associated with great historical names. There rises Elba, with the sharp outline of its lofty peaks and dark shores, too narrow for the mighty spirit which ere long burst the bounds of his Empire Island. Far away in the southern hemisphere I had visited that other island, where the chains were riveted too firmly for release, except by the grave over which I had pondered. Now we stood on the soil that gave him birth. Why was not this the "Island Empire?" The Allied Sovereigns were disposed to be magnanimous. It was offered to him; why did he refuse it? Was it that, with far-sighted policy, he considered Corsica too bright a gem in the crown of France for him to pluck, without sooner or later giving umbrage to the Bourbons? May his refusal be cited as a further proof of the little love he bore for the land of his birth? Or was it that, when once hurled from the throne of his creation, the conqueror of kingdoms could not descend to compare one petty island with another? "At Elba he found the horizon, the sky, the air, the waves of his childhood; and the history of his island-state, would be to him a constant lesson of the mutability of human things."*

Napoleon emperor in Corsica! On this spot, with Elba in view, one dwells for a moment on the idea! Then,

* *Lamartine.* See THE ISLAND EMPIRE, dedicated to Lord Holland. Bosworth, 1855.

indeed, Corsica's long-cherished dreams of national independence — it was her last chance — would have been strangely realised. But her fate was sealed. She had sunk to the rank of an outlying department of France, and so remained; with what results we may perhaps discover.

Near Elba, and strongly contrasting with its bold outline, lies the little island of *Pianosa*, the ancient Planosa. Its surface is flat, as the name indicates. That island, too, has its tale of imperial exile. The young Agrippa, grandson of Augustus, and heir-presumptive to an empire wider than that of Napoleon's most ambitious dreams, was banished to Planosa by his grandfather, at the instance of Livia. Augustus is said to have visited him there. It was Agrippa's fate to find a grave, as well as a prison, in the Mediterranean island; the tyrant Tiberius, with the jealousy of an eastern monarch, having caused his rival to be strangled on his own accession to the empire.

Soon after Napoleon's arrival in Elba he sent some troops to take possession of Pianosa; which, ravaged by the Genoese in the thirteenth century, had never since flourished. The fallen emperor himself could not help laughing at this mighty expedition, for which thirty of his guards, some Elban militia, and six pieces of artillery were detailed; exclaiming, as he gave orders to erect batteries and fire upon any enemies who might present themselves, "Europe will say that I have already made a conquest." Napoleon partially restored the fortifications of an old castle, which had been bombarded by an English squadron, landing the marines, in 1809, during the revolutionary war. The island now belongs, with Elba, to the Grand-Duke of Tuscany.

Further to the south appears the rocky island of Monte-

Cristo. This, too, has its tale of exile, insignificant as it looks except for its sharply serrated outline, and a world-wide fame. The emperor Diocletian banished here St. Mamilian, Archbishop of Palermo. A convent was afterwards founded on the site of the Saint's rude cell. The monks of Monte-Cristo flourished, as they deserved; the worthy fathers having founded many hospitals in Tuscany and done much good. Saracen corsairs carried off the monks; the convent was laid in ruins; and the lone island remained uninhabited for a long course of years, except by wild goats. It was in this state when Alexandre Dumas made it the scene of his hero's successful adventure after his escape from the *Château d'If*, and adopted it as the title of his popular novel. The island having been recently purchased and colonised by Mr. Watson Taylor, he has built a house on it for his own residence.

It is about nine miles in circumference, and I should judge from its appearance that the greatest part of the surface is rocky, though not without green hollows, dells, and verdant slopes. But the olive and the vine usually thrive, and are largely cultivated, on such spots; and if, as I should imagine, the natural vegetation and the climate are similar to those of the other islands in the Tuscan sea with which we are acquainted, happy may the lord of Monte-Cristo be; for, in the hands of a wealthy

ISLE OF MONTE-CRISTO.

English gentleman, such a spot may be made an earthly paradise.

After about an hour's walk we halted for the muleteer to come up. A glorious point of view it was, embracing a wide expanse of the bright sea, with the islands which had supplied so many striking and pleasant recollections. Looking backward, the purple mountains of Capo Corso now appeared massed together in endless variety of outline, with Bastia at their base, the citadel and white houses glowing in the evening sunshine. Turning to the right, the eye caught the fine effect of the meeting of the plain and mountains—the interminable level, stretching far away till it was lost in distance, and teeming with luxuriant vegetation, but with only here and there a solitary clump of trees,—and the long mountain-range line after line rising into peaks above the gracefully rounded hills that swelled up from the level of the plain. Woods, orchards, vineyards overspread the lower slopes, the hollows were buried in thickets of evergreen, and picturesque villages and towers appeared, though rarely, on the summits of the hills.

MEETING OF MOUNTAINS AND PLAIN, NEAR BASTIA.

Who would not linger at the sight of Furiani, the most important of these villages, its ivy-mantled towers crumbling to ruins?—Furiani, where the Corsicans, in a

national assembly, first organised their insurrection against the Genoese, and elected the prudent and intrepid Giaffori one of their leaders; with cries of "*Evviva la libertà! evviva il popolo!*"—Furiani, where, in almost their last struggle, two hundred Corsicans held the fortifications long after they were a heap of ruins, and at length cut their way by night to the shore.

The muleteer at last made his appearance with his sorry cavalcade, and my companion having taken advantage of our halt to make the sketch of the "Meeting of the mountains and plain," which was not quite finished, that we might not lose time, as the sun was descending behind the mountains, one of the mules was tied to a stake, in order that my friend might overtake us, while we made the best of our way forward.

I still preferred walking, and pushed on at a pace which suited none of my company, human or asinine. We had got ahead about a mile, when shouts from behind opened a scene perfectly ludicrous. There was the little mule trotting up the road at most unusual speed, impelled by my friend's shouts and the big stones with which he was pelting the miserable beast. He too came up at a long trot, rather excited, and calling to the muleteer, "Catch your mule, Giovanni! I'll have nothing more to do with the brute."

"What is it all about?"

It appeared that my friend, having finished his sketch, prepared to mount and push after us. The mule, however, had a design diametrically opposed to this. No sooner was it loosed from the stake to which it was tied, than the poor beast very naturally felt a strong impulse to return to its stable at Bastia. Could instinct have forewarned it

what it would have to encounter before midnight, the retrograde impulse would have been still stronger. Every one knows how difficult it is to deal with a mule when it is in the mood either not to go at all, or to go the wrong way. Having driven a team of these animals — fine Calabrian mules they were, equal to the best Spanish — all the way from Naples to Dieppe, I can boast of some experience in the mulish temperament.

To make matters worse, the English saddle being all too large for its wizened sides, in spite of all our care in knotting the girths, it twisted round in the attempt to mount, and my very excellent friend — no disparagement to his noble horsemanship, for one has no firm seat even when mounted on a vicious pony — before he could bring the saddle to a level and gain his equilibrium, was fairly pitched over the side of the road. Mule having now achieved that glorious *libertà*, the instinctive aspiration of Corsican existence, whether man, mule, or moufflon, started forward alone, my friend following, I have no doubt, in rather a thundering rage.

"At every attempt I made to take the mule by the head" — such was his account — "he reversed his position, and launched his heels at me with a viciousness that rendered the enterprise not a little dangerous, for I do not know anything so funky as an ass's heels. Had it not been for saving the saddle, mule might have taken himself off to Bastia, or a worse place, for any trouble I would have taken to stop him."

It may be supposed that this story was not told or listened to without shouts of laughter, the muleteer being the only one of the party who was seriously disconcerted.

"*Andiamo, Giovanni,*" said I, cutting short all dis-

cussion, and moved forward. We had lost time, and the evening was closing in.

"Won't you ride, then? — try the other mule."

"No, I thank you; I am not in the least fatigued, and have no desire to be pitched into a bush of prickly cactus, or rolled down the bank of the causeway."

"Let us push on, then; if we are belated, we may have worse adventures, this first day of our rambles in Corsica, before we get to our night's quarters; and where we are to find them, I am sure I have no idea."

We walked on at a smart pace, and gradually drew far ahead of Giovanni and his mules. They were not to be hurried, and if they had been gifted like Balaam's ass, I imagine they would have agreed with Giovanni in wishing *l'Inglesi all' Inferno*. I don't know, speaking from experience, which is worst, riding, leading, or driving a malcontent mule.

The rays of the setting sun were now faintly gleaming on a vast sheet of shallow stagnant water, the *Stagna di Biguglia*, between the road and the sea, from which it is only separated by a low strip of alluvial soil. It was a solitary, a melancholy scene. A luxuriant growth of reeds fringes the margin of the lagoon, and heat and moisture combine to throw up a rank vegetation on its marshy banks.[1] The peasants fly from its pestiferous exhalations, and nothing is heard or seen but the plash of the fish in the still waters, the sharp cry of the heron and gull, wheeling and hovering till they dart on their prey, and some rude fisherman's boat piled with baskets of eels for the market at Bastia.

This vast sheet of water was formerly open to the sea, forming a noble harbour, in which floated the galleys of

the powerful republics that in the middle ages disputed the empire of the Mediterranean and the possession of its islands. On a hill above stood the town of Biguglia, the capital of the island under the Pisans and Genoese, till in the fourteenth century Henri della Rocca, with the insurgent Corsicans, carried it by assault. The Genoese then erected the fortress at Bastia, which, with the town growing up under its protection, became the chief seat of their power in the island, and Biguglia fell to decay.

Mariana, a Roman colony, stood on the coast near the lower extremity of this present lagoon; and Aleria, another still further south, on the sea-line of the great plain extending for forty miles below Bastia. Our proposed route led in another direction, and, not to interrupt the thread of the narrative, a notice of these colonies is reserved for another opportunity.

We had reached the neighbourhood at which, according to calculation, we ought to strike off from the high-road towards the mountains. Now, if ever, a guide was needed; but Giovanni and his mules had fallen far in the rear. A by-road turned to the right, apparently in the desired direction. At the angle of the roads we took counsel,—should we venture to take the by-path, or wait till Giovanni came up?—which involved a loss of time we could ill spare at that period of the day. A mistake might be awkward, but we had carefully studied the bearings of the country on our maps, and deciding to risk it, struck boldly into the lane. For a short distance it led between inclosures, but presently opened, and we found ourselves on the boundless waste, with only a narrow track for our guidance through its mazes. We were in the bush, the *Macchia* as the natives call it.

CHAP. VII.

Evergreen Thickets. — Their remarkable Character. — A fortunate Rencontre. — Moonlight in the Mountains. — Cross a high Col. *— Corsican Shepherds. — The Vendetta. — Village Quarters.*

A SLIGHT ascent over a stony bank landed us at once on the verge of the thickets. It had been browsed by cattle, and scattered myrtle-bushes, of low growth, were the first objects that gladdened our eyes. A new botany, a fresh scenery was before us. The change from the littoral, with its rank vegetation, close atmosphere, and weary length of interminable causeway, was so sudden, that it took us by surprise. Presently we were winding through a dense thicket of arbutus, tree-heaths, alaternus, daphne, lentiscus, blended with myrtles, cystus, and other aromatic shrubs, massed and mingled in endless variety — the splendid arbutus, with its white bell-shaped flowers and pendulous bunches of red and orange berries, most prevailing.

The *Macchia* is, in fact, a natural shrubbery of exquisite beauty. We travelled through it, in the two islands, for many hundred miles, and I feel confident that, to English taste, it forms the unique feature in Corsican and Sardinian scenery. This sort of underwood prevails also, I understand, in Elba, and, more or less, in the other islands of the central Mediterranean basin. We now fully comprehended how it was that, when sailing along the coast, our attention had been so riveted on the rich verdure clothing

the hills and mountain-sides of Capo Corso, although at the time we were unable to satisfy ourselves in what its striking peculiarity consisted.

The air is so perfumed by the aromatic plants, that there was no exaggeration in Napoleon's language when conversing, at St. Helena, of the recollections of his youth, he said:

"*La Corse avait mille charmes; tout y était meilleur jusqu'à l'odeur du sol même. Elle lui eût suffi pour la deviner, les yeux fermés. Il ne l'avait retrouvée nulle part.*"

A trifling occurrence in my own travels gives some faint idea of the sentiment which dictated this remark. At St. Helena the flora of the North and South singularly meet. Patches of gorse (*Ulex Europæa*) — that idol of Linnæus and ornament of our English and Cambrian wastes — grow freely on the higher grounds, rivalling the purple heath in their golden bloom, and shrubs of warmer climates in their sweet perfume. Returning to England after lonely wanderings in the southern hemisphere, I well remember how the sight and the scent of this rude plant, dear in its very homeliness, recalled former scenes associated with it. I recollect, too, that the mettlesome barb which bounded over the downs surrounding Longwood did not partake of my sympathy for the golden bough I had plucked. The smooth turf and the yellow furze had no charms for the exile of St. Helena. Never was the "*lasciate ogni speranza*" more applicable than to his island-prison, and in his melancholy hours his thoughts naturally reverted, with a gush of fond tenderness, to the land of his birth, little as he had shown partiality for it in his hour of prosperity.

On its picturesque scenes we were now entering, with everything to give them the highest zest. The autumn

rains had refreshed the arid soil, and the aromatic shrubs filled the air with their richest perfume. Escaped from cities, and from steam-boats, redolent of far other odours, and having turned our backs on marsh, and *stagna*, and wearisome causeway, well strung to our work, and gaining fresh vigour in the evening breeze, we brushed through the waving thickets with little thought of Giovanni and his mules, left far behind, and as little concern whither our path would lead us. It was a beaten track, and must be our guide to some habitation. A few hours ago we set foot on shore, and we were already engaged in some sort of adventure — and that, too, in Corsica, which has an ugly reputation! "*N'importe;* it is our usual luck; it will turn out right." But let us push on, for the sun has long set, and the twilight is fading.

Fortune favoured us, for the enterprise on which we had stumbled turned out rather a more serious affair than we anticipated. It was getting dark, when the footprints of a mule on the sandy path attracted our notice, the fresh marks pointing in the direction we were taking. Soon we caught sight of a small party winding through the tall shrubbery. The turning of a zigzag on a slight rocky ascent brought the party full in view, and we closed with it. There were two girls riding astride on the same mule, with a stout peasant trudging behind. It was a pleasant rencontre.

"Good evening, friend. How far is it to the next village?"

"Three hours."

"What is it called?"

"Olmeta."

"Is the road good?"

"Mountainous and very steep."

"Allow us to join your party?"

"By all means." "*Allons donc;* we shall be late."

And the party moved on. Antoine, our new acquaintance, was, like most Corsicans, of the middle size, with a frame well knit. He had a pleasant expression of countenance, with a frank and independent air, the very reverse of our muleteer, Giovanni. We amused ourselves at having given him the slip, and continued to question our new guide.

"Shall we be able to procure beds and something to eat at Olmeta?"—the "*qualche cosa per mangiare*" being always a question of first importance.

"Never fear; you will find hospitality?"

We had no misgivings of any kind. Under Antoine's guidance we could now proceed boldly, quite at ease to enjoy all the charms of our wild adventure.

> "E pur selve oscure e calli obliqui,
> Insieme van, senza sospetto aversi." — ARIOST. Canto I.
>
> "Together through dark woods and winding ways
> They walk, nor on their hearts suspicion preys."

In about an hour, the moon, then at her full, rose above the hills on our left, shedding a soft and silvery light on the mountain-tops; our narrow path through the thickets being still buried in gloom. Presently a full tide of lustrous radiance was poured on the waving sea of verdure and the face of the mountains. We made good speed, for the family mule, homeward bound, stepped on briskly under its double burden. Sometimes we kept up with the party, joining in the talk of the good peasants; at others, falling behind to enjoy the stillness of the scene, and

abandon ourselves to the contemplation of its ever-varying features. Now we threaded the bank of a mountain torrent far beneath in shade, the depth of which the eye was unable to penetrate as we plunged downwards through the thickets; then, crossing the stream and scrambling up the opposite bank, once more emerged from the gloom, and, standing for a few instants on the summit we had gained, the grey mountain-tops again showed themselves touched with the silver light, and the quivering foliage of the evergreen shrubs, which covered the undulating expanse beneath, twinkled like diamond sprays.

In these alternations of light and shade, and precipitous descents which led on to still increasing altitudes, we followed our rocky path for about two hours, when Antoine halted his party to prepare for surmounting the main difficulty of the route, in evident surprise all the while at finding two Englishmen engaged in an adventure of which he could not comprehend the motive. And yet Antoine had seen something of the world beyond the narrow bounds of his native island. He had been a *matelot*, he said, — made a long voyage, and once touched at an English port. Antoine seemed to be now leading a vagabond life. He was not communicative as to why he left his country or why he returned, and was gay and melancholy by fits. He did not belong to Olmeta, but had friends there, to whom he was conducting the girls.

It is not often that the Corsican women ride while the men walk, the reverse being generally the case. But Antoine was gallant, and, on the whole, a good fellow. The girls, we have said, rode astride; but now, in preparation for the ascent, one of them slipped off the mule,

over the crupper, with amusing agility, relieving the poor beast of half its burden, and they afterwards rode by turns.

We now began the ascent of the pass, the Col di S^to^ Leonardo, leading into the valley of Olmeta. The Col is nearly 3000 feet above the level of the sea, and the passage proved to be almost as difficult as any I recollect having encountered. We had no idea, when we left Bastia, of attempting it that evening, and, had we not parted from Giovanni, should probably have made for some village near the high-road, and lost the splendid effects of moonlight on such scenery. The face of the mountain is scaled either by rocky steps or by terraces cut in the escarped flanks, with quick returns, in the way such elevations are usually surmounted. The passing and repassing, as we traversed the successive stages, brought out the effects of light and shade even better than we had remarked them below. The path, too, was extremely picturesque. Masses of grey rock, half in shade, jutted out among the shrubbery with which the mountain-side was covered; giant heaths, five or six feet high, hung feathering, and the arbutus threw its broad branches, over our heads.

We had made some progress, and stood, as it were, suspended over the valley, when Antoine's quick ear caught sounds from below. We halted to take breath and listen. Presently, the sounds became more distinct, and we made out the tramp of mules coming up the path, but still far beneath. It was probably Giovanni with his mules, following our steps. Again we stood and listened, looking over the precipice at an angle which commanded the descent for many hundred feet beneath. The thicket shrouding the narrow track was so dense, that nothing could be seen, even in that bright moonlight, but its

glistening slope. The sounds from below rose more clearly. Thwack, thwack, fell Giovanni's cudgel on the ribs of his unfortunate mules; and we could hear them scrambling, and his hoarse voice uttering strange cries, as he urged them on.

We were too much amused at having given him the slip to think much of the great tribulation in which he was panting and toiling to overtake us. Vain hope! "He will be in time for supper; let us push on;"—beginning to think that the sooner we realised the comforts which Antoine had encouraged us to expect, the better.

"Are we near the top of the pass?"

"Do you see that rock with the bush hanging from it?" pointing to a huge, insulated mass, its sharp outline clearly defined against the blue sky; "it is a thousand feet above the spot on which we stand. The path lies round the base of that rock. In an hour we shall reach it."

We climbed on, the ascent becoming steeper and steeper as we mounted upwards, often casting wistful looks at the beacon rock. Just before we gained the summit, smoke was seen curling up from the copse at a little distance from the path.

"*Ci sono pastori,*" cried Antoine.

"Perhaps they can give us some milk." We had need enough of some refreshment, the breakfast at Bastia having been our only meal.

"*Vedéremmo,*" said Antoine; and he led the way through the bushes.

Some rough dogs leapt out, fiercely barking at the approach of strangers. They were called off by the shepherds, who, wrapped in their shaggy mantles, the Corsican *pelone*, were sitting and lying round a fire of blazing logs, under the shelter of a rock. A mixed flock of sheep and

goats lay closely packed round the bivouac. Unfortunately they had no milk to give us.

The Corsican shepherds are a singular race. We found them leading a nomad life in all parts of the island. They wander, as the season permits, from the highest mountain-ranges to the verge of the cultivated lands and vineyards, where the goats do infinite mischief; and drive their flocks in the winter to the vast plains of the littoral, and the warm and sheltered valleys. Home they have none; the side of a rock, a cave, a hut of loose stones, lends them temporary shelter. Chestnuts are their principal food; and their clothing, sheepskins, or the black wool of their flocks spun and woven by the women of the valleys into the coarse cloth of the *pelone*. Their greatest luxuries are the immense fires, for which the materials are boundless, or to bask in the sun, and tell national tales, and sing their simple *canzone*. But though a rude, they are not a bad, race; contented, hospitable, tolerably honest, and, as we found, often intelligent. We were not fortunate in our first introduction to these people. Antoine exchanged a few words with them; but they were sullen, and showed no signs of surprise or curiosity on the sudden appearance of strangers at their fireside. The sample was far from prepossessing. One of the men, who seemed to eye us with suspicion, had just the physiognomy one should assign to a bandit.

It was perhaps this idea which led me to question Antoine on a subject we had hitherto avoided.

"Are there any outlaws harboured in these wild mountains?"

"Not now; they have been hunted out; all that is

changed; but blood has been often spilt in this *maquis*. One terrible *vendetta* was taken not far from hence; but that was many years ago. I will show you the spot."

Antoine strode rapidly onward; and we overtook the women, who had rode on. In ten minutes we were rounding the mass of rock crowning the pass.

"This was the spot," said Antoine, taking a step towards me, the rest of the party having passed; and he added calmly, but with decision, and a slightly triumphant air, "I did it myself." ("*J'ai donné le coup moi-même.*")

It may be well supposed that I stood aghast. We had not then learnt with what little reserve such deeds of blood are avowed in Corsica; how thoroughly they are extenuated by the popular code of morals or honour. Such avowals were afterwards made to us with far less feeling than Antoine betrayed; indeed, with the utmost levity. "*Je lui ai donné un coup,*" mentioning the individual and giving the details, was the climax of a story of some sudden quarrel or long-harboured animosity. It was uttered with the *sang froid* with which an Englishman would say, "I knocked the fellow down;" and it might have been our impression that nothing more was meant, but for the circumstances related, which left no doubt on the subject. When a Corsican says that he has given his enemy a *coup*, the phrase is a decorous ellipse for *coup-de-fusil*. Occasionally, perhaps, it may mean a *coup-de-poignard*, which amounts to much the same thing; but since carrying the knife has been rigorously prohibited by the French Government, stabbing has not been much in vogue in Corsica. Now, it is to be hoped, the murderous *fusil* has equally disappeared.

There was no time for asking what led to the quarrel or encounter. Antoine coolly turned away, saying, "The descent is easy; we shall have a good road now down the hill to Olmeta;" and, most opportunely, the view which opened from the summit of the pass was calculated to divert my thoughts from what had just occurred.

It has been often remarked, that the Corsican villages are most commonly built on high ground. We now counted, by their cheerful lights, nine or ten of them dotting the hills in all directions; some perched on the heights beyond the Bevinco, which wound through the valley beneath, the moonlight flashing on patches of the stream and faintly revealing a dark chain of mountains beyond—the Serra di Stella, dividing the valley of the Bevinco from that of the Golo.

The descent was easy, according to Antoine's augury. We tear down the hill, pass the village church at a sharp angle, its white *façade* glistening in the moonbeams; and a straight avenue, shaded by trees, brings us into a labyrinth of narrow lanes, overhung by tall, gaunt houses of the roughest fabric and materials. Antoine bids us stop before one of these gloomy abodes; an old woman appears at the door of the first story with a feeble oil-lamp in her hand. The ground-floor of these houses, as usual in the South, are all stables or cellars. After a short conference, Antoine disappears, and we see him no more that night. We mount a flight of steep, unhewn stone steps, at the risk of breaking our necks, for there is no rail; the good dame welcomes us to all that she has, little though it be, and we land in a grim apartment containing the usual raised hearth for cooking, with a very limited apparatus of utensils—a few shallow kettles of copper and iron, a

table, some chairs, and a very questionable bed in a corner.

There were two other apartments, *en suite*, the next being a *salle*, with a brick floor like the kitchen, tolerably clean. A few Scripture prints on the walls, a large table, some rickety chairs, and a settee, convertible, we found, into a very satisfactory shakedown, composed the furniture. The inner apartment, which contained a really good bed, seemed to be the widow's wardrobe and storeroom of all her most valuable effects; being crowded with chests, and tables covered with all sorts of things, helped out by pegs on the walls. These were ornamented with little coloured prints of the Virgin and Saints, and there was a crucifix at the bed's head. After showing her apartments, the widow placed the lamp on the table in the *salle*, with the usual *felice notte*, and there was a running fire of questions and answers between her and the two hungry travellers about the *qualche cosa per mangiare*. The larder was of course empty, and the discussion resolved itself into some rashers of bacon, a loaf of very sweet bread, and a bottle of the light and excellent wine for which Capo Corso is famous, procured from a neighbour.

This was not accomplished without a great deal of bustle and screeching, and running to and fro of the widow and some female friends, withered old crones, who had come to her aid on so unexpected an emergency as our appearance on the scene. This continued after supper till the chests in the inner apartment had delivered up their stores of sheets, coverlets, and towels, all as white as the driven snow. How we ate, drank, and lodged during our rambles is not the most agreeable of our recollections, and can have little interest except as affording glimpses of the

habits of the people. This first essay of Corsican hospitality was not amiss.

Just as we had finished our frugal meal, Giovanni made his appearance. Wishing to give him his *congé*, we expected a sharp altercation; to avoid which, and not forfeit our engagement that he should conduct us to Corte, it was proposed to him to leave the malcontent mule till his return, procuring at Olmeta a more serviceable beast, or to proceed with the others only. Giovanni was crestfallen; he had had enough of it, and did not bluster, as we expected. Though disliking him, we had amused ourselves at his expence, and could hardly now refrain from laughing at his piteous aspect. Giovanni, however, was quite as ready to be quit of us as we were to get rid of him. His reply to our proposal about the mule was quite touching: —

"*Je ne veux pas me séparer de mon pauvre âne!*"

So the inseparables were dismissed to return to Bastia, after an equitable adjustment, and we parted good friends. Giovanni was no favourite of ours, but that touch of sentiment for his "*pauvre âne*" was a redeeming trait. As for ourselves, we were left without a guide, which did not matter, and without the means of carrying forward our baggage, which did. This dilemma did not spoil our rest; it was such as weary travellers earn.

CHAP. VIII.

The Littorale. — *Corsican Agriculture.* — *Greek and Roman Colonies.* — *Sketch of Mediæval and Modern History.* — *Memoirs of King Theodore de Neuhoff.*

LET us now return for a short space to the point at which we quitted the high-road from Bastia. More attractive metal drew us off to the mountain-paths; but the *Littorale* is not without interest, especially as the seat of the earliest and most thriving colonies in the island. These and its subsequent fortunes claim a passing notice.

It may be recollected that our road lay for some miles through the plain between the mountains and the Mediterranean. This level is between fifty and sixty miles long. Intersected by the rivers flowing from the central chain, alluvial marshes are formed at their mouths, and there are also, from similar causes, several lagoons on the coast, of which the Stagna di Biguglia, near which we turned off into the *maquis*, is the largest. The exhalations from these marshes and waters render the climate so pestiferous, that the *littorale* is almost uninhabited. The soil is extremely fertile, producing large crops where it is cultivated, and affording pasturage to immense herds of cattle, sheep, and goats. The country people inhabit villages on the neighbouring hills, descending into the plains at the seasons when their labour is required for

tilling and sowing the land, and harvesting the crops; and but too frequently carrying back the seeds of wasting or fatal diseases.

Even under the double disadvantages of exposure to malaria, and the natural indolence of the Corsican peasant, this district supplies a very large proportion of the corn consumed in the island. So great is this indolence, that not more than three-tenths of the surface of Corsica is brought under cultivation, although it is calculated that double that area is capable of it. I was unable to ascertain the number of acres under tillage, planted with vines and olive-trees, or otherwise requiring agricultural labour; but it might have been supposed that a population of 230,000 souls would at least have met the demand for labour on the portion of the surface thus occupied. So far, however, from this being the case, it is a curious fact that from 2000 to 3000 labourers come into the island every year from Lucca, Modena, and Parma, to engage in agricultural employment. They generally arrive about the middle of April, and take their departure in November. They are an intelligent, laborious, and frugal class; and as the savings of each individual are calculated at 100 or 110 francs, no less a sum than 200,000 francs is thus annually carried to the Continent instead of being earned by native industry. The climate of Corsica is described by many ancient writers as insalubrious; but there does not seem to be any foundation for the statement, except as regards the *littorale*, the only part of the island which appears to have been colonised in early times, and with which they were acquainted.

Who were its primitive inhabitants and first colonists, whether Corsus, the supposed leader of a band of immi-

grants, who gave his name to the island, was a son of Hercules or a Trojan, are facts lost in the mist of ages, through which the origin of few races can be penetrated. An inquiry into such traditions would be a waste of time, and is foreign to a work of this kind.

There is reason to believe that the light of civilisation first beamed on its shores from Sardinia — an island which some brief records, and, still more, its existing monuments, lead us to consider as civilised long before the period of authentic history.

The island of Sardinia, placed in the great highway from the East, was a convenient station for the people who, in the first ages, were driven thence by a providential impulse towards the shores of the West, and, with the torch of civilisation in their hands, passed successively by Asia Minor and the islands of Crete, Sicily, and Sardinia to Greece, to Italy, and the other countries of the West.

A smaller branch of the torrent of this great and primitive emigration poured from the mountain ranges in the north of Sardinia, and, crossing the straits, overspread the south of Corsica, bearing with it the civilisation of the East, of which records are found in the most ancient Corsican monuments. Some of these are identical with those in Sardinia, which will be mentioned hereafter. Such are the Dolmen, called in Corsica *Stazzone;* and the Menhir, to which they give the fanciful name of *Stantare.* When a child at play stands on its head with its heels self-balanced in the air, making itself a pyramid instead of cutting a pirouette, that is, in the language of mothers and nurses, *far la Stantare.*

However this may be, there are numerous testimonies that the island of Corsica was known and visited in the

most remote times by navigators of the several races on the shores of the Mediterranean — Phœnicians, Pelasgians, Tyrrhenians, Ligurians, and Iberians. Herodotus, who calls the island Cyrnos, describes an attempt at colonisation by Phocæans, driven from Ionia, who founded the city of Alalia, afterwards called Aleria, 448 years before the Christian era. But the genuine history of Corsica commences with the period when the Roman republic, on the decay of the Carthaginian power, began to extend its conquests in the Mediterranean.

In the year 260 B.C., Lucius Cornelius Scipio led an expedition into the island, which was crowned with success. Every traveller who has visited Rome must have been interested in one of the few relics of the republican era, remarkable for its primitive simplicity — the tomb of the Scipios. It chanced that the writer, when there, procured a model of the sarcophagus which contained the ashes of this first of a race of heroes, L. C. Scipio. The monuments of Rome were not of marble in the times of the republic, and this sarcophagus being cut out of a block of the volcanic *peperino*, so common in the Campagna, the author had his model made of the same material, with the inscription cut in rude characters round the margin; that is to say, such part of it as had been preserved, so that it is a perfect fac-simile. He reads on it —

HEC CEPIT CORSICA ALERIAQUE URBE.

That fragment contains the earliest record of Roman conquest in Corsica. But the conquest was incomplete, and for upwards of a century the Corsicans maintained an unequal struggle against the Roman legions, strong in their mountain fastnesses, while the Roman armies appear to

have seldom advanced beyond the plains. The natives held their ground with such obstinacy that, on one occasion, after a bloody battle, a consular army, under Caius Papirius, was so nearly defeated, when rashly entangled in the gorges of the mountains, that the Corsicans obtained honourable terms of peace. The Roman historians relate that this battle was fought on "The Field of Myrtles," a name appropriate to a Corsican *macchia;* and they do not otherwise describe the locality.* It is easy to imagine the scenes and the issue of a deadly struggle between the mountaineers and the disciplined legions, on ground such as that described in the preceding chapter.

In these wars great numbers of the natives were carried off as slaves to Rome, and the annual tribute paid on submission consisted of wax, which was raised to 200,000 lbs. after one defeat.

A two hours' walk over the plains from the point at which we quitted the high-road would bring us to the ruins of Mariana, a colony founded by Marius on the banks of the Golo, and to which he gave his name. Not a vestige of Roman architecture can now be found on the spot.

During the civil wars, the rivals, Marius and Sylla, established each a colony in Corsica. That of Sylla (Aleria) stood forty miles further down the coast, at the mouth of the Tavignano, the seat of the ancient Greek colony of Alalia. Sylla restored it, sending over some of his veteran

* In the same way, Ordericus Vitalis represents William the Conqueror to have said in his last moments, when reviewing his life, that he fought against Harold (meaning what English historians call the Battle of Hastings—a name never given to that battle by the Normans) *in Epitumo* (query *Epithymo?*), a word only found in the work of Ordericus; referring, probably, as his editor remarks, "to the odoriferous plants found on heaths."—*Forester's Ordericus Vitalis*, Bohn's Edition, vol. ii. p. 412.

soldiers, among whom he distributed the conquered lands, and it became the capital of the island during the Roman period, and so continued during the earlier part of the middle ages. Sacked and laid in ruins by the Arabs, some iron rings on the Stagna di Diana, the ancient port, large blocks of stone on the site of a mole at the mouth of the Tavignano, some arches, a few steps of a circus, with coins and cameos occasionally turned up, are the sole vestiges of the Roman colonisation in Corsica. Their only road led from Mariana by Aleria to Palæ, a station near the modern Bonifaccio, from whence there was a *trajectus* to Portus Tibulus (Longo Sardo), in Sardinia; and the road was continued through that island to its southern extremity, near Cagliari.

In the decline of the Roman power, Corsica shared the fate of the other territories in the Mediterranean attached to the eastern empire. Seized by the Vandals under Genseric, despotically governed by the Byzantine emperors, pillaged by Saracen corsairs, protected by Charlemagne, and, on the fall of his empire, parcelled out, like the rest of Europe, among a host of feudal barons, mostly of foreign extraction—who, from their rock-girt towers, waged perpetual hostilities with each other, and tyrannised over the enthralled natives — claimed by the Popes in virtue of Pepin's donation, and granted by them to the Pisans,—after a long struggle between the two rival republics contending for the supremacy of the Mediterranean, the island at last fell under the dominion of the Genoese.

This dominion the republic of Genoa exercised for more than four centuries (from the thirteenth to the eighteenth) in an almost uninterrupted course of gross misrule. Instead of endeavouring to amalgamate the islanders with

her own citizens, she treated them as a degraded cast, worthy only of slavery. A governor, frequently chosen by the republic from amongst men of desperate circumstances, had the absolute sovereignty of the island: by his mere sentence, on secret information, without trial, a person might be condemned to death or to the galleys. The venality of the Genoese tribunals was so notorious, that the murderer felt sure to escape if he could pay the judge for his liberation.*

The Corsicans were not a race which would tamely submit to this tyranny, and their annals during this long period exhibit a series of bloody struggles against the Genoese republic, and devoted efforts to maintain their rights and recover their independence. In these contests the *signori* either allied themselves with the Genoese, or took part with their countrymen, as their interest inclined; while a succession of patriot leaders, such as few countries of greater pretensions can boast — Sambucchio, Sampiero, the Gaffori, the Paoli — all sprung from the ranks of the people; the bravest in the field and the wisest in council, carried aloft the banner of Corsican *libertà*.

The hostilities were not confined to the parties immediately interested in the quarrel. Foreign aid was invoked on the one side and on the other, and for a long period the little island of Corsica became the battle-field of the great European powers; Spaniards, Austrians, French, and English, at one time or the other, and especially in the decay of the Genoese republic, throwing their forces into the scale, and occupying portions of the island, but with no definitive result, until its final absorption in the dominion of its present masters.

* *Benson's Corsica*, p. 81.

Little interest would now attach to the details of a struggle confined to so insignificant a territory, and having so little influence on European politics; and it would be alike foreign to the province of a traveller, and wearisome to the reader, that the subject should be pursued, except incidentally, where events or persons connected with the localities he visits call forth some passing remarks. An exception may perhaps be allowed in the course of this narrative for some account of the English intervention in Corsican affairs. It is little known that our George III. was once the constitutional king of Corsica. Nelson, too, performed there one of his most dashing exploits.

Just now we have been talking of Aleria, a place identified with a curious and somewhat romantic episode in Corsican history. Corsica cradled and sent forth a soldier of fortune, to become in his aspirations, and almost in effect, the Cæsar of the western empire. Corsica received into her bosom a German adventurer, who, for a brief space, played on this narrow stage the part of her crowned king. That there is but a short interval between the sublime and the ridiculous, was exemplified in the career of these upstart monarchs. Both sought an asylum in England. The one pined in an island-prison, the other in a London gaol.

THEODORE DE NEUHOFF, KING OF CORSICA.*

On the 25th March, 1736, a small merchant-ship, carrying the English ensign, anchored off Aleria. There landed

* The following biographical sketch is compiled from the works of Boswell and Benson, and the compendious *Histoire de la Corse*, by M. Camille Friess.

from it a personage of noble appearance, with a suite of sixteen persons, who was received with the deference due to a monarch. He superintended the disembarkation of cannon and military stores, and gratuitously distributed powder, muskets, and other accoutrements, to the Corsicans who crowded to the shore.

The imagination exercises a powerful sway over the people of the South. The mystery which surrounded this personage, his dignified and polished manners, the important succour he brought, and even the fantastical and semi-Oriental cast of his dress, all contributed to produce a great influence on ardent minds naturally inclined to the marvellous. This was Theodore de Neuhoff.

Theodore Antoine, Baron de Neuhoff, a native of Westphalia, had been in his youth page to the Duchess of Orleans, and afterwards served in Spain. Returning to France, he attached himself to the speculations of Law, and partook the vicissitudes of splendour and misery which were the fortunes of his patron. When that bubble burst, our adventurer wandered through Europe, seeking his fortune with a perseverance, combined with incontestible talent, which, sooner or later, must seize some opportunity of accomplishing his schemes.

At Genoa he fell in with Giaffori and some other Corsican patriots, then exiled; and representing himself to be possessed of immense resources, and even to have it in his power to secure the support of powerful courts, offered to drive the Genoese out of the island, on condition of his being recognised as King of Corsica. The patriot chiefs, seduced by these magnificent promises, and, perhaps, too apt to seek for foreign aid wherever it could be found, accepted Theodore's offers.

Not to follow him through all the course of his romantic adventures, it appears that he found means of credit — perhaps from the Jews, with whom he was already deeply involved—for a considerable sum of ready money, and the arms, ammunition, and stores necessary for his expedition. Landing in Corsica, in the manner already described, the Corsican chiefs, although they had concerted his descent on the island, had the address to cherish the popular idea that Theodore's arrival was a mark of the interest taken by Heaven in the liberty of the Corsicans.

In a popular assembly held at the Convent of Alesani, a Constitution was resolved on, by which the kingdom of Corsica was settled hereditarily in the family of the Baron de Neuhoff; taxation was reserved to the Diet, and it was provided that all offices should be filled by natives of the island. The baron, having sworn on the Gospels to adhere to the Constitution, was crowned with a chaplet of laurel and oak in the presence of immense crowds, who flocked to the ceremony from all quarters, amid shouts of "*Evviva Teodoro, re di Corsica!*"

Theodore took possession of the deserted episcopal residence at Cervione, where he assumed every mark of royal dignity. He had his court, his guards, and his officers of state; levied troops, coined money, instituted an order of knighthood, and created nobility, among whom such names as *Marchese* Giaffori and *Marchese* Paoli (Pasquale's father) singularly figure. His manifesto, in answer to Genoese proclamations denouncing his pretensions and painting him as a charlatan, affected as great a sensitiveness of insult as could exist in the mind of a Capet. For some time all things went well; Theodore became master of nearly the whole island except the Genoese fortresses,

which he blockaded. These were, in fact, the keys of the island. But the succours which he had boasted of receiving did not arrive, and, after employing various artifices to keep alive the expectations of foreign aid and fresh supplies of the muniments of war, finding, when he had held the reins of power about eight months, that his new subjects began to cool in their attachment to his person, and did not act with the same ardour as before, he determined to go over to the Continent, with the hope of obtaining the means of carrying on the war, and thus reinstating himself in the confidence of the Corsicans.

Appointing a regency to conduct the affairs of his kingdom during his absence, he went to Holland, and, though even his royal credit was probably at a discount, after long delay, he succeeded in negotiating a considerable loan, at what rate of interest or on what security we are not told. However, a ship was freighted with cannon, and other warlike stores, on board of which he returned to Corsica two years after he had quitted the island. But it was too late; the French were then in possession of the principal places, the patriot leaders were negotiating with them, and the people had lost all confidence in their mock-king. Theodore found, to use a colloquial expression, that "the game was up," and wisely retracing his steps, found his way to England, the last refuge of abdicated monarchs.

Fortune still frowned on him. Pursued by his relentless creditors, the ex-king was thrown into the King's Bench prison. His distresses attracted the commiseration of Horace Walpole, who, as Boswell informs us, "wrote a paper in the 'World,' with great elegance and humour, soliciting a contribution for the monarch in distress, to be paid to Mr. Robert Dodsley, bookseller, as lord high trea-

surer. This brought in a very handsome sum, and he was allowed to get out of prison." "Walpole," he adds, "has the original deed by which Theodore made over the kingdom of Corsica in security to his creditors." Mr. Benson's statement, which is more exact, and agrees with the epitaph, is, that the subscription was not sufficient to extricate King Theodore from his difficulties, and that he was released from gaol as an insolvent debtor. However that may be, he died soon afterwards. Former writers have stated that he was buried in an obscure corner, among the paupers, in the churchyard of St. Anne's, Westminster, but they are mistaken. We find a neat mural tablet fixed against the exterior wall of the church of St. Anne's, Soho, at the west end, on which, surmounted by a coronet, is inscribed the following epitaph, written by Horace Walpole:—

"Near this place is interred
THEODORE, KING OF CORSICA,
Who died in this parish
Dec. 11, 1756,
Immediately after leaving
The King's Bench Prison
By the benefit of the Act of Insolvency;
In consequence of which
He registered his kingdom of Corsica
For the use of his Creditors.

The grave, great teacher, to a level brings
Heroes and beggars, galley-slaves and Kings:
But Theodore this moral learned, ere dead:
Fate poured his lesson on his living head,
Bestow'd a kingdom, and denied him bread."

CHAP. IX.

Environs of Olmeta. — Bandit-Life and the Vendetta. — Its Atrocities. — The Population disarmed. — The Bandits exterminated.

OLMETA stands, like most Corsican villages, on the point of a hill, forming one side of an oval basin, the slopes of which are laid out in terraced gardens and vineyards.

OLMETA.

Here and there, in sheltered nooks, we find plantations of orange-trees, now showing green fruit under their glossy

leaves. Some fine chestnut and walnut trees about the place, and the magnificent elms (*olme*), from which it derives its name, soften the aspect of its bleak, exposed site, and gaunt houses.

Charming as the natural landscapes are in Corsica, one finds most of the villages, however picturesque at a distance, on a nearer approach, a conglomeration of tall, shapeless houses, black and frowning, with windows guarded by rusty iron *grilles*, and generally unglazed. Altogether, they look more like the holds of banditti than the abodes of peaceful vinedressers; while the filth of the purlieus is unutterable. Throwing open the double casements of the widow's sanctum, I may not call it boudoir, when I leapt out of bed to enjoy the fresh morning air,—underneath was a noisome dunghill, grim gables frowned on either hand, but beyond was the *riant* landscape just described. Here truly God made the country, man the town.

While my friend was sketching, I strolled up to the pretty church we had seen by moonlight. Close by is a large, roomy mansion, which belonged to Marshal Sebastiani. He was a native of Olmeta, and, from an obscure origin, arriving at high rank as well as great wealth, partly, I understood, through a brilliant marriage, bought a large property in the neighbourhood, which has been recently sold for 150,000 francs to a French *Directeur*. I went over the château: to the original mansion the marshal had added a handsome *salle*, and a lofty tower commanding varied and extensive views towards Fiorenzo and the Mediterranean. My conductor was a gentleman of Olmeta, who accidentally meeting me, proffered his services, pressing me afterwards to take breakfast with

him. We had done very well at the widow's long before, with delicious bread, eggs, apples, and figs, and coffee in the smallest of cups. We brewed our own tea in a brand-new coffee-pot, purchased for that purpose at Bastia. Butter and milk were wanting, but whipped eggs make a very tolerable substitute for the latter.

My new acquaintance informed me that the decree, passed the year before for disarming the whole population, combined with measures for increasing the force of the *gendarmerie*, and making it highly penal to harbour the bandits or afford them any succour, had been actively and rigorously carried out, and were completely successful. The life of a citizen is as safe in Corsica as in any other department of France. "You may walk through the island," added my informant, "with a purse of gold in your bosom."

This was true, I imagine, with regard to strangers, in the worst of times; their security from molestation being nearly allied to the national virtue of hospitality, which is not quite extinct. Nor were the Corsican banditti associated, like those of Italy, for the mere purpose of plunder, though they have heavily taxed the peaceable inhabitants, both by drawing from the poor the means for their subsistence in the woods and mountains, and by levying, under terror, direct contributions in money from the more wealthy inhabitants in the towns and villages. These are, however, but trifling ingredients in the mass of crime for which Corsica has been so painfully distinguished. Would, indeed, that robbery and pillage were the sins of the darkest dye which have to be laid to the account of the Corsican bandit! Most commonly, his hands have been stained with innocent blood, shed recklessly, relentlessly,

in private quarrels, often of the most frivolous description, and not in open fight, as in the feuds of the middle ages, not in the heat of sudden passion, but by cool, premeditated murder.

Philippini, the best Corsican historian, who lived in the sixteenth century, states that in his time 28,000 Corsicans were murdered in the course of thirty years. A later Corsican historian calculates that between the years 1683 and 1715, a period of thirty-two years, 28,715 murders were perpetrated in Corsica; and he reckons that an equal number were wounded. The average, then, in their days, was about 900 souls yearly sent to their account by the dagger and the *fusil* in murderous assaults; besides vast multitudes who fell in the wars.

It was still worse in earlier ages; but those of which we speak were times of high civilisation, and Corsica lay in the centre of it. What do we find in recent times, up to the very year before we visited the island?

I have before me the *Procès verbal* of the deliberations of the Council General of the department of Corsica for each of the years 1850, '51, and '52. From these I gather that 4,300 *assassinats* had been perpetrated in Corsica since 1821; and, in the three years before mentioned, the "*Assassinats, ou tentatives d'assassiner,*" averaged ninety-eight annually from the 1st of January to the 1st of August, to which day the annual reports are made up; so that, reckoning for the remaining five months in the same proportion, the list of these heinous crimes is brought up to the fearful amount, for these days, of 160 in each year.

Well might M. le Préfet observe, in his address at the opening of the session of 1851: "*La situation du département à cet égard est sans doute profondément triste. Le*

nombre des crimes n'a pas diminué sensiblement." So low, however, is the moral sense in Corsica with regard to the sanctity of human life, that these atrocities excite no horror, and the sympathies of vast numbers of the population are with the bandits. They are the heroes of the popular tales and *canzoni;* one hears of them from one end of the island to the other, round the watchfires of the shepherds on the mountains, in the remote *paése*, by the roadside. They are the tales of the nursery, — the Corsican child learns, with his Ave Maria, that it is rightful and glorious to take the life of any one who injures or offends him.

To a passionate and imaginative people, these tales of daring courage and wild adventure have an inconceivable charm; though stained with blood, they are full of poetry and romance. Such stories have been eagerly seized upon by writers on Corsica, — they make excellent literary capital. Unfortunately, *banditisme* forms so striking a feature in Corsican history, that it must necessarily occupy a conspicuous place in a faithful review of the genius and manners of the people. There are doubtless traits of a heroism worthy a better cause, and sometimes of a redeeming humanity, in the lives of the banditti; but one regrets to find, though happily not in the works of the English travellers who have given accounts of Corsica, a tendency to palliate so atrocious a system as blood-revenge. *Vendetta*, the name given it, has a romantic sound; and it is treated as a sort of national institution, originating in high and laudable feelings, the injured sense of right, and the love of family; so that, with the glory shed around it by a false heroism, it is almost raised to the rank of a virtue.

To take blood for blood, not by the hand of public justice, but by the kinsmen of the slain, was, we are reminded, a primitive custom, sanctioned by the usages of many nations, and even by the laws of Moses. We know, however, that among our Anglo-Saxon ancestors the laws humanely commuted this right of revenge for fines commensurate with the rank of the murdered person. But while the Mosaic law forbad the acceptance of any pecuniary compensation for the crime of manslaughter, and expressly recognised the right of the "avenger of blood" to exact summary vengeance, it provided for even the murderer's security until he were brought to a fair trial. But Corsica, alas! has had no "Cities of Refuge," and examples drawn from remote and barbarous times can afford no apology for the inveterate cruelties of a people enjoying the light of modern civilisation and professing the religion of the New Testament.

The *vendetta* is also represented as a kind of rude justice, to which the people were driven in the long ages of misrule during which law was in abeyance or corruptly administered. There is, no doubt, much truth in this as applied to those times; but the prodigious amount of human slaughter shown in the statistics just quoted, as well as the continuance of this atrocious system to the present day, long after the slightest shadow of any pretence of legal injustice has vanished, seem to argue that the ferocity which has shed such rivers of blood, if not instinctive in the national character, at least found a soil in which it took deep root.

For more than half a century, there can be no question but, under a settled government, strict justice has been done by the ordinary proceedings of the courts of law, in

all cases of injury to person or property, submitted to them. But the turbulent Corsicans were ever impatient of regular government — one great cause of their ultimate degradation, not a little connected also with the growth of *banditisme;* and the failure of justice has not lain with the authorities, but with the population which harbours and screens the criminals, and with the juries who refuse to convict them.*

The only other instance in the present day of crimes similar to those which have been the scourge of Corsica, is found in the case of unhappy Ireland. There, however, the blood-revenge has been mostly confined to cases of supposed agrarian grievances, and the number of victims sacrificed to it is comparatively limited; more innocent blood having been shed in Corsica in a single year, than in Ireland during, perhaps, a quarter of a century.

The *vendetta* is also palliated as vindicating wrongs for which no courts of law, however upright, can afford

* This appears from the Report of a Committee on the Public Safety made to the Council General of the Department of Corsica in 1851. It says: "La société et l'innocence doivent trouver dans la loi une égale protection; mais l'avantage ne doit pas rester au crime.

"Les acquittements multipliés, et souvent scandaleux, n'ont que trop démontré que notre législation actuelle renferme trop de chances pour l'impunité, et ne présente pas toutes les garanties que la société est en droit de reclamer pour la répression des crimes.

"Elle a pensé qu'en ce qui touche les proportions de la majorité, *l'institution du jury devrait être modifiée.*"

The proposition was rejected, on the principle which operated when the difficulty of obtaining convictions in Ireland raised a similar question; namely, that such an exceptional measure was inexpedient.

"En ce qui touche l'organisation du jury, le Conseil a pensé que cette proposition ne pouvait être faite que dans un intérêt général pour la France, et qu'en lui donnant un caractère spécial pour la Corse, elle resemblerait trop à une mesure d'exception que le Conseil repousse."

redress. Among the most polished nations, "the point of honour" has been held to justify an injured man for challenging his adversary to mortal combat. But the duel, from its first origin among our Scandinavian ancestors, savage as they were, and through all its forms, whether legalised or treated as felonious, to its last shape in civilised society, has nothing practically in common with the Corsican *vendetta*. In the one, the appeal to arms has always been tempered by a punctilious chivalry, which recoiled from the slightest unfairness in the attendant circumstances; in the other, the enemy is, if possible, taken unawares, shot down by a cowardly miscreant lurking behind a tree or a rock, or suddenly stabbed without an opportunity of putting himself on his defence. The practice of the *vendetta* is mere assassination.

Stript of the colouring shed round it by sentiment and romance, *banditisme*, in its latter days at least, has been a very common-place affair. Great numbers of the Corsicans, too indolent to work, were happy to lead a vagabond life, harbouring in the woods and mountains with a gun on their shoulders, and as ready to shoot a man as a wild beast. "*C'est qu'en général*," said the Préfet, in the address already quoted, "*ces crimes proviennent moins du banditisme que de la déplorable habitude de marcher toujours armés, par suite de laquelle les moindres rixes dégénèrent si souvent en attentats contre la vie.*" One hears continually for what trifles assassinations have been perpetrated; and a recent traveller informs us that his life was threatened for having merely resisted the extortionate demand of his guide to the mountains.

The hardships to which the bandit is exposed in his wild life in the *maquis* cannot be much greater than those of

the shepherd who, from fear or favour, shares with him his chestnuts, his goat's milk, and cheese. The *gendarmes*, indeed, are sometimes on his track, but there is stirring adventure in eluding their pursuit, triumph in the ambuscade to which they become victims, glory even in death heroically met. With all its perils and hardships, such a life of lawless independence has its charms; and the bandit knows that his memory will be honoured, and his death, if possible, revenged. But who laments the unfortunate *gendarme* who falls in these encounters? Who pities the widow and orphans of men as bold, resolute, and enterprising as those against whom they are matched? In the tales of banditti life, the ministers of justice are *sbirri*, conventionally a term of disgrace; all the sympathy is with the culprit against whom the *gendarmerie* peril their lives in an arduous service.

The brigands must live by plunder in one shape or another. It is not likely that bands of armed men, the terror of a whole neighbourhood, would be always content with the mere subsistence wrung from the scanty resources of the poor shepherds. Not that they robbed on the highways; it answered better to levy contributions, under pain of death, from such of the defenceless inhabitants as were able to pay them. Mr. Benson tells a story of one of the most celebrated of the bandit chiefs, who levied black mail in the wild districts bordering on the forest of Vizzavona.

"Leaving Vivario, we heard from the lips of the poor *curé*, that Galluchio and his followers were in the *maquis* of a range of mountains to our right. The *curé* was busy in his vineyard when we passed, but as soon as he recognised our French companion, he left his work for a

few moments to join us. 'Sir,' said he, addressing himself to M. Cottard, 'I feel myself in imminent danger; Galluchio and his band are in yonder mountains, and only a few evenings ago I received a peremptory message from him, requiring 300 francs, and threatening my speedy assassination should I delay many days to comply with his demand. I have not the money, and I have sent for some military to protect me.'" *

There is reason to believe that these forced contributions have not diminished since Mr. Benson's journey. We were told of a case in which a wealthy man, having received notice to pay 10,000 francs, under penalty of being shot, was so terrified, that after shutting himself up in his house for a year in constant alarm, his health and spirits became so shattered by the state of continual terror and

* "With all the outrages," continues Mr. Benson, "of which Galluchio and his followers are guilty, he is by no means void of moral feeling, and is quite a polished character when he enters private society, as I learnt from a French gentleman who had met him at breakfast at the house of a mutual acquaintance. My friend, when he found himself in such company, naturally betrayed a little alarm, but Galluchio reassured him, saying, 'You and yours have nothing to fear at my hands.'

"I am really afraid to extract from my notes many of the wild adventures of this Corsican Rob Roy. Not long since, a shepherd, personating him, violated a female peasant. The chieftain soon obtained information of the gross outrage that had been committed on his character; and finding the shepherd, took him before the mayor of Bagniola, and this at a time when Galluchio had six sentences of death hanging over him. At the chieftain's instigation, the shepherd was compelled to espouse the poor girl. Galluchio, after the marriage had been solemnised, said to the shepherd, 'Remember that you make a good husband. I shall keep a watchful eye over your conduct; and should I hear that your wife receives any maltreatment from you, yourself and your family shall pay with their lives for your misconduct.' The man little attended to Galluchio's warning. The chieftain adhered to his threat, and the shepherd, with his father and several other members of the same family, fell victims."—*Benson's Sketches in Corsica*, pp. 23—25.

watchfulness in which he lived, that he sank under it, and was carried out dead. In another case, a young man of more resolute character was called upon for 1000 francs, and having no ready money, was allowed three months to raise it, on giving his bill for security. He armed himself, and went to the appointed rendezvous. The brigand was waiting for him: he made him lay down his arms, and searched him. The young man had filled his pockets with chestnuts, and had contrived to secrete a small pistol about his person, which escaped discovery. The brigand, producing paper and ink, ordered his victim to draw the bill. The young man excused himself on the ground that he was so frightened, and his hand trembled so that he could not write; — he would sign the bill if the other drew it out. The brigand knelt down by the side of a flat stone to do so. Meanwhile the young man walked up and down eating his chestnuts, and throwing the shells carelessly away. Some of them struck the brigand. "What are you doing?" said he, startled. "Eating my chestnuts;" and he took out another handful. Occasionally he stopped and looked down on the bandit while engaged in writing; still, with apparent *sang froid*, munching his chestnuts. Presently the bill was finished; he pretended to look it over, found some error, which he pointed out, and while the brigand stooped to correct it, drew his concealed pistol and shot him through the head.— The so-called *vendetta* has shrunk more and more to the level of vulgar crime. It is even notorious that bandits have become hired assassins, employed by others to take off persons against whom they had a grudge, — "*mais plus pour amitié que pour argent*," said my informant, giving the fact the most favourable turn.

It seems surprising that such enormities should have been permitted in a European country, at an advanced period of the nineteenth century. Could a strong national government have been established in Corsica — which, however, seems to have been impracticable with so lawless and factious a people — its first duty would have been, as was the case under Pascal Paoli's administration, to give security to life, *coûte que coûte*. The successive Governments of France appear to have been too much occupied by their own affairs to pay any regard to the social state of their Corsican department, flagrant as was the disgrace it reflected on them. Perhaps they were impressed with the idea that the passion of revenge, the thirst for blood, were so inherent in the native character, that law and force were alike powerless, and the *vendetta* could only be extirpated by a moral change more to be hoped for than expected. Thus speaks the Préfet, in his inaugural address of 1851: — "*Ici, messieurs, vous en conviendrez, l'administration est sans force. C'est à la religion seule qu'appartient la touchante prérogative de prêcher l'oubli des injures:*" and a traveller who spent some time in the island during the year following, gives the result of his observations in the following words: — "There is probably no other means of certainly putting down the blood-revenge, murder, and bandit-life, than culture; and culture advances in Corsica but slowly." *

The same author says of the general disarming, proposed in 1852: "Whether, and how, this will be capable of execution, I know not. It will cost mischief enough in the execution; for they will not be able to disarm the

* *Corsica, by F. Gregorovius.* Chap. x. p. 149. of the translation published by Longman & Co.

banditti at the same time, and their enemies will then be exposed, unarmed, to their bullets." These doubts and forebodings are proved to have been imaginary. It might have been long, indeed, before preaching and moral culture had eradicated evils so deeply rooted in the genius of the people. In such an extreme case, the exercise of a despotic power was required to put an end to the reign of terror and blood which has desolated this fair island for so many centuries. One bold stroke has broken the spell; the measures adopted for the suppression of *banditisme* have completely succeeded. "The prisons are full," said my informant; "in the last year, 400 of the brigands have been sentenced or shot down, and as many more driven out of the country: the land is at peace."

The only wonder is that the experiment was not tried before.

CHAP. X.

The Basin of Oletta. — The Olive. — Corsican Tales. — The Heroine of Oletta. — Zones of Climate and Vegetation.

We found that no mules could be hired at Olmeta, and intending to wander for a few days in the neighbouring valleys, and on the skirts of the mountainous district of Nebbio, though we preferred walking, were at some loss how to get forward our baggage. The Bastia muleteer was dismissed, and as we were travelling somewhat at our ease, the luggage was more than could be conveniently carried. In this dilemma, Antoine proffered the services of himself and the mule which had done its work so well the evening before. His offer was readily accepted, and we had much reason to be pleased with the change we had made in our conductor. Antoine relieved us from all care as to our baggage and entertainment, knew the roads, and where we could best put up, had by heart many a story of times past, and something to tell of all the places we visited, and, having been a rover himself, entered into the spirit of our rambles: altogether, as I have observed before, Antoine was an excellent specimen of a Capo Corso peasant. To be sure, he had killed his man, but that was in a *duello*, according to Corsican ideas; as singular, if one may jest on such a subject, as Captain Marryat's famous triangular duel.

The valleys of Olmeta, Oletta, and some others, form a

sort of basin between the mountains bounding the *littorale*, already spoken of, and the Serra di Tenda, a noble range in the western line of the principal chain. Broken by numberless hills, the whole basin is a scene of fertile beauty, similar to the picture drawn of Olmeta — vine-yards, olive-grounds and gardens, orange, citron, fig, almond, apple, and pear-trees, clustering at every turn with groups of magnificent chestnut-trees, and alternating with spots devoted to tillage. The country people were now sowing wheat or preparing the ground with most primitive ploughs, of the Roman fashion, drawn some-times by a single ox or mule. Patches, on which the green blade was already springing, showed that it is the practice to sow wheat as soon as possible after the autumnal rains.

Retracing our steps of the preceding night nearly to the summit of the pass, under the persuasion that it com-manded a fine prospect, we turned to the right, and strolled along a terrace above the broad valley through which the Bevinco flows into the Stagno di Bigu-glia, somewhat below the point at which we left it. Looking backward, we had a charming peep at the Mediterranean through a gorge in the mountains, with the lonely island of Monte-Cristo, seen from this point of view detached from the rest of the

ISLE OF MONTE-CRISTO, THROUGH A GORGE.

group of islands to which it belongs. Across the valley was a range of mountains, a branch of the central chain dividing it from that of the Golo. Mists hung about them, pierced by the Cima dei Taffoni, the most elevated point of the range, which rose magnificently, being about 3000 feet high, twenty miles to the south-east. The ridge along which we strolled was covered partly by patches of the never-failing evergreen shrubbery, rendered more beautiful by the quantities of cyclamen, one of the prettiest plants we have in our greenhouses at home, now in full flower under the shelter of the arbutus and other shrubs. Small flocks of sheep, all black, and no larger than our Welsh mountain breed, were browsing among the barren patches of heath, and sometimes crossed our path, with their tinkling bells. There was a slight shower; but it soon cleared off, and the sun shone out, and the air and surface of the ground, cooled and freshened by the gentle rain, were in the best state for the continuation of our rambles.

The cultivation, as may be supposed, is indolent and imperfect, the surface being merely scratched, and little care taken to free it of weeds. We need not, therefore, be surprised at finding that the average produce of the wheat-crop throughout Corsica is only an increase of nine on the seed sown. Of maize, or Indian corn, it is thirty-eight or forty.

The canton of Oletta is called by the Corsicans "the pearl of the Nebbio." It contains two or three hamlets, the principal village seeming to hang on the rocky slope of a hill, embowered in fruit trees. The olive flourishes particularly well here; and Oletta takes its name from its olive-trees, as Olmeta does from its elms. Many of them

are of great age and size, and, with their silvery leaves, have a soft and pleasing effect, especially when contrasted with the richer foliage of the spreading chestnut-trees. The olive-yards are neatly dug and kept clear of weeds; and we observed that the soil was drawn round the stems of the trees, probably in well-manured heaps, such a produce as the olive truly requiring to feed on the fat of the land. The berries were now full formed, but had not begun to fall. I believe they hang till Christmas, when they are collected, and carried to the vats. When pressed, twenty pounds of olives yield five of pure oil. It is stored in large pottery jars, and forms the principal export from Corsica; this district, with the Balagna and the neighbourhood of Bonifaccio, producing the largest quantity. An inferior sort of oil is used in the lamps throughout the island; the lamps being of glass, with tall stems containing the oil, and crowned by a socket, through which the cotton burner is passed, and having nothing of the antique or classical about them. The birds scattering the berries in all directions, and carrying them to great distances, the number of wild olive-trees is immense. An attempt was made to count them, by order of the Government, in 1820, with a view to foster so valuable a source of national wealth by the encouragement of grafting; and it is said that as many as twelve millions of wild olive-trees were then counted.

There is a story of love and heroism connected with Oletta. One hears such tales everywhere in Corsica — by the wayside, at the shepherd's watch-fire, lying in the shade, or basking in the sun. Antoine was an excellent *raconteur;* so are all such vagabonds. I possess a collec-

tion of these tales by Renucci, published at Bastia*, and proposed to interweave some of them into my narrative. They may be worked up, with invention and embellishment, into pretty romances; but that is not our business. In Renucci, we have stories of *Ospitalità*, *Magnanimità*, *Fedeltà*, *Probità*, *Generosità*, *Incorruttibilità*, all the virtues under the sun with names ending in *tà*, and many others. One wearies of the eternal laudation lavished on these islanders, not only by their own writers, but by all travellers, from Boswell downwards.

The story of the heroine of Oletta is told by Renucci †, and, more simply, by Marmocchi.‡ During the occupation of Capo Corso by the French, in 1751, some of the villagers were sentenced to be broken on the wheel for a conspiracy to seize the place, which was garrisoned by the French; their bodies were exposed on the scaffold, and their friends prohibited, under severe penalties, from giving them Christian burial. But a young woman, *giovinetta scelta e robusta*, as she must have been to perform the exploit assigned to her in the tale, eluded the sentries, and, taking the body of her lover, one of the conspirators executed, on her shoulders, carried it off. The general in command, struck by her exalted virtue, pardons the offence, and she is borne home in triumph amidst the shouts of the villagers.

All honour to the French marquis for his gallantry to a woman, though his tactics were somewhat savage for the reign of Louis XVI.; and all glory to Maria Gentili of Oletta, stout of heart and strong of limb, fit to be the

* *Novelle Storiche Corse, di F. O. Renucci.* Bastia, 1838.

† *Novella VIII. L'Amore e la Religion.* Renucci, p. 43.

‡ Marmocchi. *Géographie Politique de l'Ile de Corse*, p. 117.

wife and mother of bandits; still better, to have fought at Borgo, where Corsican women, in male attire, with sword and gun, rushed forward in the ranks of the island militia which triumphantly defeated a French army, composed of some of the finest troops in Europe.*

But let us proceed with our rambles; and, before we change the scene from the region of the vine and the orange to that of the chestnut and ilex, a short digression on the climatic zones of Corsica may not be out of place.

BETWEEN OLMETA AND BIGORNO.

The island may be divided, as to climate and vegetation, into three zones, corresponding with the degrees of eleva-

* In this sanguinary battle, fought in 1768, the Corsicans, under Pasquale and Clemente Paoli, Murati, and their other chiefs, thrice repulsed the French army of 15,000 men under Chauvelin, and forced them to retreat in disorder to Bastia. The garrison of Borgo, a force of 700 men, laid down their arms, and surrendered to the Corsicans.

tion of its surface. The *first*, ranging to about 1,700 feet above the level of the Mediterranean, and embracing the deeper valleys of the island, as well as the sea-coast, has the characteristics conformable to its latitude; that is to say, similar to those of the parallel shores of Italy and Spain. Properly speaking, there is no winter; they have but two seasons, spring and summer. The thermometer seldom falls more than a degree or two below the freezing point, and then only for a few hours. The nights are, however, cold at all seasons.

When we were at Ajaccio, towards the end of October, the heat was oppressive; my thermometer at noon stood at 80° in the shade, in an airy room closed by Venetian blinds. In January, we were told, the sun becomes again powerful, and then for eight months succeeds a torrid heat. The sky is generally cloudless, the thermometer rises from 70 to 80 and even 90 degrees in the shade, and scarcely any rain falls after the month of April; nor indeed always then, so that there are often long and excessive droughts.

The indigenous vegetation is generally of a class suited to resist the droughts, having hard, coriaceous leaves. Such is the shrubbery described in a former chapter, which, exempt from severe frosts on the one hand, and thriving in an arid soil and parching heat on the other, clothes half the surface of the island with perpetual verdure. There have been seasons when even these shrubs were so burnt up that the slightest accident might have caused a wide-spread conflagration. When we travelled, the leaves of the rock-roses, which here grow to the height of four or five feet, were hanging on the bushes

scorched and withered by the summer heat, somewhat marring the beauty of the evergreen thickets.

Most of the fruit-trees suited to flourish in such a climate have been already noticed in passing. We saw also almonds, pomegranates, and standard peaches and apricots. To the list of shrubs which most struck us, I may also add the brilliant flowering oleander, and the tamarisk. Corsica is said to be famous for its orchids, verbenas, and cotyledinous and caryophyllaceous plants; but I only speak of what I saw, and these were out of season.

The *second* zone ranges from about 2000 feet to between 5000 and 6000 feet above the level of the Mediterranean, the climate corresponding with that of the central districts of France. The temperature is, however, very variable, and its changes are sudden. Frost and snow make their appearance in November, and often last for fifteen or twenty days together. It is remarked, that frost does not injure the olive-trees up to the level of about 3800 feet; and snow even renders them more fruitful.

The chestnut appears to be the characteristic feature in the vegetation of this zone. Thriving also among hills and valleys of a lower elevation, here it spreads into extensive woods, till at the height of about 6000 feet it is exchanged for the pine, and Marmocchi says*, I think incorrectly, *cède la place* to the oak and the *beech*. We certainly found the oak, both evergreen (ilex) and deciduous, growing very freely and in extensive woods in close contiguity with the chestnut at an elevation far below the limit of the *second* zone, as well as mixed with the pine in the forest of Vizzavona, also below that limit. But, from

* *Géographie Physique*, p. 57.

my own observation, I should class the oak of both kinds among the trees belonging to the second zone, though the chestnut is its most characteristic feature; and should much doubt its flourishing at the height of between 6000 and 7000 feet above the sea-level,—still more the beech. The highest point at which we found the beech was the Col di Vizzavona, on the road from Vivario to Bocagnono, 3435 feet above the level of the Mediterranean, and I was surprised to see it flourishing there.

While the principal cities and towns in Corsica stand within the limits of the first zone, it is in the second that by far the greatest part of the population live, — dispersed, as we have often had occasion to remark, in valleys and hamlets placed on the summits or ridges of hills. The choice of such positions is a necessary condition of health, as in this region, no less than in the former, the valleys are notorious for the insalubrity of the air.

The *third* zone, ranging from an elevation of about 6000 feet to the summits of the highest mountains, is a region of storms and tempests during eight months of the year; but during the short summer the air is said to be generally serene, and the sky unclouded. This elevated region has, of course, no settled inhabitants, but during the fine season the shepherds occupy cabins on its verge, their sheep and goats browsing among the dwarf bushes on the mountain sides. The vegetation is scanty. Even the pine cannot thrive at such an elevation, and the birch, which one generally finds, though dwarf, still higher up the mountains, I did not happen to see in Corsica, though it is mentioned in *Marmocchi's* list of indigenous trees.

The summits of the Monte Rotondo and Monte d' Oro are capped with snow at all seasons, and beautiful are

snowy peaks, piercing the blue heavens in the sunny region of the Mediterranean, and well does the glistening tiara, marking from afar their pre-eminence among the countless domes and peaks which cluster round them, or break the outline of a long chain, assist the eye in computing their relative heights. We had no opportunity of ascertaining how low perpetual snow hangs on the sides of the highest Corsican mountains. According to M. Arago, Monte Rotondo is 2762 *mètres* (about 8976 feet) above the level of the sea; and he says that there are seven others exceeding 2000 *mètres* (about 6500 feet). Among these must be included Monte d' Oro, which figures in Marmocchi's list at 2653 *mètres*, or about 8622 feet. The season was too late for our making an ascent with any prospect of advantage; but at that time of the year (the end of October) none of the peaks we saw, except the two named, though some of them are only from 500 to 800 feet lower than Monte d' Oro, had snow upon them.

While rounding the base of Monte d' Oro, we observed long streaks on the side of the cone, descending, perhaps, 1000 feet below the compact mass on the summit; but they had the appearance of fresh-fallen snow, and from our observing that all the other summits were free from snow, I am inclined to assign the height of about 7500 or 8000 feet above the level of the Mediterranean as the line of perpetual snow in Corsica.

In Norway, between 59°—62° N. latitude, we calculated it at about 4500 feet on the average, the line varying considerably in different seasons. In the summer of 1849 there was snow on the shores of the Miös-Vand, which are under 3000 feet, while the summer before the lakes on the table-land of the Hardanger Fjeld, 4000 feet high,

were free from ice, and throughout the passage of the Fjeld the surface covered with snow was less than that which was bare. In 1849, crossing the Hardanger from Vinje to Odde, the whole of the plateau was a continued field of snow.* Taking the entire mountain system of central Norway, from the Gousta-Fjeld to Sneehættan and the Hörungurne, with elevations of from 5000 to near 8000 feet, the average of the snow-level may be taken, as before observed, at about 4500 feet; that of the Corsican mountains, with elevations of from 6000 to nearly 9000 feet, being, as we have seen, from 7000 to 8000 feet.

In Switzerland, where the elevations are so much greater, the snow-line varies from 8000 to 8800 feet above the level of the sea.† On Mont Blanc it is stated to be 8500 feet. The height differs on the northern and southern faces of the chain within those portions of the Alps that run east and west, but 8500 feet may be taken as the average.

We may be surprised to find that congelation rests at the same, or nearly the same, level in the Alps of Switzerland, and on the Corsican mountains eight degrees further south. But difference of latitude is no determinate rule for calculating the level to which the line of perpetual snow descends. There are other influences to be taken into the account, such as the duration and intensity of summer heats, the comparative dryness of climate, the extent of the snow-clad surface in the system generally,

* *Norway in* 1848—1849, pp. 188, 189. (8vo. Ed., Longman & Co.) Professor Forbes arrives at nearly the same result from the observations of Von Buch and others. *Norway and its Glaciers*, pp. 207, &c.

† Professor Forbes (*Travels in the Alps*) states the average height of the snow-line at 8500 feet.

and more especially the height and exposure of particular mountains.* Thus the snow-line on the southern slope of the Alps is in some cases as high as 9500 feet. It may be conceived that as the great extent of snow-clad surface on the high Fjelds of Norway so much depresses the level of the snow-line in that country, so the great superincumbent mass resting on the summits of the higher Alps has a similar effect, reducing the average snow-line in Switzerland to nearly that of the Corsican mountains. The wonder is that Monte Rotondo and Monte d' Oro, — rising from a chain surrounded by the Mediterranean, in insulated peaks of no very considerable height, without glaciers or snowy basins to reduce the temperature, — should, in a climate where the sun's heat is excessive for eight months of the year, have snow on their summits in the months of July and August. I have observed the *Pico di Teyde* in Teneriffe with no snow upon it in the first days of November, though it is 3000 feet higher than Monte Rotondo, and only five degrees further south. Mount Ætna, also, nearly 11,000 feet high, in about the same latitude as the Peak of Teneriffe (37° N.), is free from perpetual snow; but that may arise from local causes.

* See an Essay by Professor Forbes on Isothermal Lines and Climatology, in *Johnstone's Physical Atlas*, p. 17.

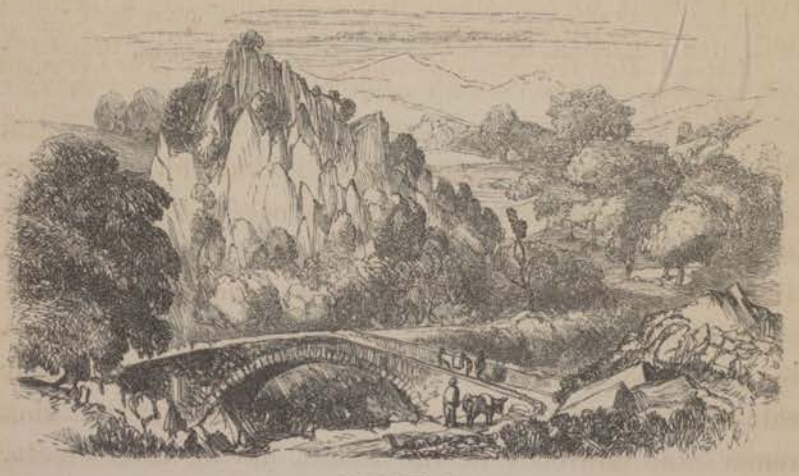
CHAP. XI.

Pisan Church at Murato. — Chestnut Woods. — Gulf of San Fiorenzo.—Nelson's Exploit there.—He conducts the Siege of Bastia.—Ilex Woods.—Mountain Pastures.—The Corsican Shepherd.

MURATO, a large, scattered village, which formerly gave its name to a *piève*, and is now the *chef-lieu* of a canton, stands on the verge of a woody and mountainous district. Just before entering the village, we were struck by the superior character of the *façade* of a little solitary church by the roadside. We afterwards learnt that it was dedicated to St. Michael, and reckoned one of the most remarkable churches in the island, having been erected by the Pisans, before the Genoese established themselves in Corsica. The *façade* is constructed of alternate courses of black and white marble, and put me in mind of the magnificent cathedrals of Pisa and Sienna, of which it is a model in miniature. Indeed, most of the churches in Corsica are built on these and similar Italian models, though few of them with such chaste simplicity of design as this little roadside chapel.

The smiling aspect of the vine-clad hills, umbrageous fruit-orchards, and silvery olive-groves of the canton of Oletta now changed for a bolder landscape and wilder accompaniments. Soon after leaving Murato, the ilex began to appear, scattered among rough brakes, and a

sharp descent led down to the Bevinco, here a mountain-torrent, hurrying along through deep banks, tufted with underwood, the box, which grows largely in Corsica, being profusely intermixed. The road—like all the other byroads, merely a horse-track — crosses the stream by a bold arch.



PONTE MURATO.

Immediately in front of the bridge stands a pyramidal rock, remarkable for all its segments having the same character, and for the way in which evergreen shrubs hang from the fissures in graceful festoons, contrasting with some gigantic gourds, in a small cultivated patch at the foot of the rock, and sloping down to the edge of the stream.

Higher up we entered the first chestnut wood we had yet seen. At the outskirts it had all the character of a natural wood; the trees were irregularly massed, and many of them of great age and vast dimensions. Further

on they stood in rows, this tree being extensively planted in Corsica for the sake of the fruit. We were just in the right season for this important harvest, it being now ripe, and the ground under the trees was thickly strewed with the brown nuts bursting from their husky shells.

It being about noon, we halted in the shade by the side of a little rill, trickling among the trees into the river beneath, to rest and lunch. Nothing could be more delightful, after a long walk in the sun; for the temperature of the valleys is high even at this season. Antoine had charge of a basket of grapes, with a loaf of bread and a bottle of the excellent Frontigniac of Capo Corso; to these were added handfuls of chestnuts, so sweet and tender when perfectly fresh; so that, tempering our wine in the cool stream, we fared luxuriously.

While we sip our wine and munch our chestnuts, seasoned by talk with Antoine, the reader may like to hear something of a crop which is of more importance than might be supposed in the agricultural statistics of Corsica.

There are several cantons, Murato being one of the principal, in which the chestnut woods, either natural or planted, are so extensive that the districts have acquired the name of *Paése di Castagniccia*. The Corsican peasant seldom sets forth on a journey without providing himself with a bag of chestnuts, and with these and a gourd of wine or of water slung by his side, he is never at a loss. Eaten raw or roasted on the embers, chestnuts form, during half the year, the principal diet of the herdsmen and shepherds on the hills, and of great numbers of the poorer population in the districts where the tree flourishes. They are also made into puddings, and served up in various other ways. It is said that in the canton of Alesanni, one of the Castagniccia districts just referred to, on the occa-

sion of a peasant making a feast at his daughter's marriage, no less than twenty-two dishes have been prepared from the meal of the chestnut.

I recollect that the innkeeper at Bonifaccio, boasting his culinary skill, said that he could dress a potato sixteen different ways, and though we earnestly entreated him not to give himself the trouble of making experiments not suited to our taste, it was with great difficulty, and after several failures, we made him comprehend that an Englishman preferred but one way — and that was "*au naturel.*"

The cultivation of the potato has made considerable advance in Corsica, and there are now seventeen or eighteen hundred acres annually planted with it. But in many parts of the island the chestnut fills the same place which the potato once occupied in the dietary of the Irish peasant. A political economist would find no difficulty in deciding that in both cases the results have been similar, and much to be lamented. Indeed, the Corsican fruit is still more adapted to cherish habits of indolence than the Irish root, as the chestnut does not even require the brief exertion, either in cultivation or cookery, which the potato does. It drops, I may say, into the Corsican's mouth, and living like the

"Prisca gens mortalium."

"the primitive race of mortals," of whom the poet sings, who ran about in the woods, eating acorns and drinking water, the Corsicans are, for the most part, satisfied with their chestnuts literally "*au naturel.*"

Most French writers on Corsica declare war against the chestnut-trees for the encouragement they afford to a life of idleness, and M. de Beaumont does not scruple to assert,

that a tempest which levelled them all with the ground would, in the end, prove a great blessing. There is some truth in these opinions, but humanity shudders at the misery such a catastrophe — like the potato blight, which truly struck at the root of the evil in Ireland — would entail on tens of thousands of the poor Corsicans, to whom the chestnut is the staff of life. In the interests of that humanity, as well as from our deep love and veneration for these noble woods, we say, God forbid!

Many years ago, an attempt was made to discountenance the growth of chestnuts, by prohibiting their plantation in soils capable of other kinds of cultivation; but shortly afterwards the decree was revoked on the report of no less a political economist than the celebrated Turgot.* *Vivent donc ces châtaigniers magnifiques, quand même!* And may the Corsicans learn not to abuse the gifts which Providence gratuitously showers from their spreading boughs!

Our *al fresco* repast on chestnuts and grapes being concluded, we left Antoine to load his mule, which had been grazing in the cool shade, and following a track through the wood, it became so steep that we soon gained a very considerable elevation. Of this we were more sensible when, turning round, we found that our range of sight embraced one of the finest views imaginable. In the

* "Un Arrêt du Conseil du 22 Juin, 1771, avait défendu de planter des châtaigniers dans aucun terrain de l'île susceptible d'être ensemencé de blés ou autres grains, ou d'être converti en prairies naturelles ou artificielles, ou plantés de vignes, d'oliviers, ou de mûriers. Deux ans après cet arrêt fut revoqué par un autre, où l'on reconnaissait que les châtaigniers étaient pour les habitants de certains cantons un moyen d'existence nécessaire dans les temps de disette, et dans tous les temps un objet de commerce avantageux. Ce dernier arrêt fut rendu sur le rapport du célèbre économiste Turgot." — *Robiquet*, quoted by *Marmocchi*, p. 225.

distance, the long chain of mountains intersecting Capo Corso appeared grouped in one central mass, with their rocky summits and varied outlines more or less boldly defined, as they receded from the point of view. The western coast of the peninsula stretched far away to the northward, broken by a succession of mountainous ridges, branching out from the central chain, and having their bases washed by the Mediterranean, point after point appearing in perspective.

Of these indentations in the coast, the nearest, as well as the most important, is the Gulf of San Fiorenzo, one of the

CAPO CORSO FROM THE CHESTNUT WOODS.

finest harbours in the Mediterranean. The town stands on a hill, above the marshy delta of the Aliso, the course

of which we could trace through the most extended of these high valleys. Close beneath our standing point, as it appeared, lay the basin of Oletta, with its villages on the hill-tops, and its gentle eminences, with slopes and hollows richly clothed, now grouped together like the mountain ranges above, but in softer forms. This view, whether as partially seen in our first position through the glades and under the branching canopy of the chestnut wood, or shortly afterwards, still better, from a more commanding point on the summit of the ridge, had all the advantages which the most exquisite colouring, and the finest atmospheric effects could lend. Indeed, I felt persuaded, that the extraordinary richness of the warm tints on some of the mountain sides was not merely an atmospheric effect, but aided by the natural colour of the formation.

The whole country lying beneath, the ancient province of Nebbio, with the Gulf of San Fiorenzo for its outlet, guarded by the mountain ridges and embracing the districts of Oletta, Murato, and Sorio, is of such importance in a strategical view, that the fate of Corsica has often been decided by campaigns conducted on this ground; and it is said that whatever power obtains possession of it, will sooner or later become masters of the whole island.

San Fiorenzo, a fortified place, was bombarded in 1745 by an English fleet acting in concert with the King of Sardinia for the support of the Corsicans against the Genoese, and on the surrender of the place it was given up to the patriots. Then first the British Government interfered in Corsican affairs; but shortly afterwards, when some of the patriot leaders sent emissaries to Lord Bristol, our ambassador at the court of Turin, offering to put

themselves under the protection of the English Government, the court of St. James's, deterred probably by the jealousies then subsisting among the supporters of the patriotic cause, civilly declined the offer, and withdrew their fleet. Having thus lost by their own misconduct the powerful co-operation of England, the Corsicans, left to their own resources, after a long and determined struggle, at length yielded to a power with which they were unable to cope.

San Fiorenzo was again the scene of British intervention, when the Corsicans, throwing off in 1793 the yoke of the French revolutionary government, applied to Lord Hood, the commander-in-chief in the Mediterranean, for assistance. In consequence, Nelson, then commanding the "Agamemnon," and cruising off the island with a small squadron, to prevent the enemy from throwing in supplies, made a sudden descent on San Fiorenzo, where he landed with 120 men. Close to the port the French had a storehouse of flour adjoining their only mill. Nelson threw the flour into the sea, burnt the mill, and re-embarked in the face of 1000 men and some gun-boats, which opened fire upon him. In the following spring, five English regiments were landed in the island under General Dundas, and Lieutenant-Colonel (afterwards Sir John) Moore having taken possession of the heights overlooking the port of San Fiorenzo, the French found themselves unable to hold the place, and sinking one of their frigates, and burning another, retreated to Bastia.

Nelson's dashing enterprise was succeeded by another of far greater moment, characteristic of the times when our old 74's had not been superseded by costly screw three-deckers, and our naval commanders, though not

wanting in discretion, acted on the impulses of their own brave hearts, without any very nice calculations of responsibilities and possible consequences.

On a *reconnaissance* made by Nelson on the 19th of February, when he drove the French under shelter of their works, it appeared that the defences of Bastia were strong. Besides the citadel, mounting thirty pieces of cannon and eight mortars, with seventy embrasures counted in the town-wall near the sea, there were four stone redoubts on the heights south of the town, and two or three others further in advance; one a new work, with guns mounted *en barbette*. A frigate, "La Flèche," lay in the harbour, but dismasted; her guns were removed to the works. These works were held by 1000 regular troops, 1500 national guards, and a large body of Corsicans, making a total of 4000 men under arms.

To attack this formidable force, manning such defences, Nelson could only muster 218 marines, 787 troops of the line under orders to serve as such, the admiral insisting on having them restored to this service, 66 men of the Royal Artillery, and 112 Corsican chasseurs, making a total of 1183 troops. To these were added 250 sailors. Meanwhile, the English general made a *reconnaissance* in force from San Fiorenzo, and retired without attempting to strike a blow, though he had 2000 of the finest troops in the world lying idle; declaring that the enterprise was so rash that no officer would be justified in undertaking it. He even refused to furnish Lord Hood with a single soldier, cannon, or store.

The Admiral replied, that he was most willing to take

* *Clarke and M'Arthur's Life of Nelson*, vol. i. pp. 156, &c.

upon himself the whole responsibility, and Nelson, nothing daunted, landed his small force on the 9th of April, three miles from the town, and the siege operations commenced. Encamping near a high rock, 2500 yards from the citadel, and the seamen working hard for several days in throwing up works, making roads, and carrying up ammunition, the fire was opened on the 12th of the same month. The works of the besiegers were mounted with four 13-inch and 10-inch mortars, an 18-inch howitzer, five 24-pounder guns, and two 18-pounder carronades. I give these details in order to show with what small means the daring enterprise was accomplished.

Lord Hood had sent in a flag of truce, summoning the city to surrender; to which M. La Combe St. Michel, the Commissioner of the National Convention, replied, "that he had red-hot shot for our ships and bayonets for our troops, and when two-thirds of his men were killed, he would trust to the generosity of the English."

The place being now regularly invested, there was heavy firing on both sides, "the seamen minding shot," as Nelson characteristically wrote to his wife, "no more than peas." The besiegers' works were advanced, first to 1600 yards, and afterwards to a ridge 900 yards from the citadel; and on the 19th of May, thirty-five days after the fire was opened, the enemy offered to capitulate. The same evening, while the terms were negotiating, the advanced guard of the troops from San Fiorenzo made their appearance on the hills above the place, and on the following morning the whole army, under the command of General D'Aubant, who had succeeded Dundas, arrived just in time to take possession of Bastia.

Nelson had anticipated this, for in a letter to his wife,

written during the siege, he says, "My only fear is, that the soldiers will advance when Bastia is about to surrender, and deprive our handful of brave men of part of their glory."

But the work was already done, and Nelson writes after the surrender of the place, "I am all astonishment when I reflect on what we have achieved." A force of 4000 men in strong defences had laid down their arms to 1200 soldiers, marines, and British seamen.

The political results of these operations, which for the time numbered the Corsicans among the willing subjects of the British crown, will claim a short notice on a fitting opportunity. History is not our province, but a traveller may be allowed to trace the footsteps of his countrymen during their brief occupation of a soil fiercely trodden by all the European nations; and, on a standing point between Fiorenzo and Bastia, naturally lingers for a moment on a feat of arms memorable among our naval exploits in the Mediterranean.

After leaving the chestnut woods, the wildness of the scene increased at every step. Our track skirted a forest of ilex spreading far up the base of the mountains, and filling the glens below, round the gorges of which the path led. The trees were of all ages, from the young growth, with a shapely *contour* of silvery grey foliage, to the gigantic patriarchs of the forest, spreading their huge limbs, hoar with lichens, in most fantastic and often angular forms, and their boles black and rugged with the growth of centuries. Some were rifted by the tempests, and bared their scathed and bleached tops to the winds of heaven. Others had yielded to the storms or age, and lay prostrate on the ground, charred and blackened by the fires which the

shepherds in these wilds leave recklessly burning. The destruction thus caused to valuable timber throughout the island is enormous. Among the ilex were scattered a few deciduous oaks, contrasting well in their autumnal tints with their evergreen congeners. We thought the colouring was not so rich as that of our English oak woods at this season, being of a paler or more tawny hue, resembling the maple and sycamore. Precipitous cliffs and insulated masses of grey rock broke the outline of the forest, and the charming cyclamen still tufted the edge of the path with its delicate flowers, nestling among the roots of the gigantic oaks; between the tall trunks of which glimpses were occasionally caught of the distant mountain peaks.

We had been ascending, generally at a pretty sharp angle, from the time we crossed the Bevinco, and had walked about three hours, when, emerging from the skirts of the ilex forest, we found ourselves on an elevated ridge connected with the vast wastes of which the greater part of the east and north-east of the province of Nebbio is composed. The surface is bare and stony, with a very scanty herbage among aromatic plants and bushes of low growth, consisting principally of the branching cistuses, which, however they may enliven these barren heaths by their flowers in the earlier part of the year, increased its parched and arid appearance now that the leaves hung withered on their stems.

Yet on these barren solitudes the Corsican shepherd spends his listless days and watchful nights. He has no fixed habitation, and never sleeps under a roof, but when he piles some loose stones against a rock to form a hut. Roaming over the boundless waste as the necessity of

changing the pasturage of his flock requires, he finds his best shelter in the skirts of the forest, and his food in the chestnuts, which he luxuriously roasts in the embers of his watchfire when he is tired of eating them raw. The ground was so undulating that at one view we could see a number of these flocks on the distant hill sides; the little black sheep in countless numbers dotting the heaths, and the shepherds, in their brown *pelone*, either following them as they browsed in scattered groups, or perched in strong outline on some rocky pinnacle commanding a wide area over which their charge was scattered. Their bleating and the tinkling of the sheep-bells were wafted on the breeze, and more than once a flock crossed our path, and we had a nearer view of the wild and uncouth conductor.

My companion sat down to sketch, while I walked on. This often happened. Indeed, his rambles were often discursive, so that I lost sight of him for hours together; once in Sardinia, when there was reason to fear his having been carried off to the mountains by banditti. Thus, each had his separate adventures; on the present occasion I had opened out a new and splendid view, and, having retraced my steps to lead him to the spot, he related his.

Intent on his sketch, my friend was startled, on raising his head, at seeing a wild figure standing at his elbow. Leaning on a staff, its keen eyes were intently fixed on him. My friend at once perceived that one of the shepherds had crept upon him unawares. A year before, when they all carried arms, there would have been nothing in his exterior to distinguish him from a bandit, but an ingenuous countenance and a gentle demeanour.

The young shepherd seemed much interested in my friend's occupation, the object of which, however, he could not comprehend. His face brightened with pleasure and surprise on learning that the visitor to his wilds was an Englishman. The memory of the red-coats, who came to espouse the cause of Corsican liberty, lingers in Corsican traditions, and the English are esteemed as their truest friends. It was something new in the monotonous existence of the young shepherd to fall in with one of that race, though he had not the slightest idea where on the face of the earth they lived; still he was intelligent, inquisitive, and hospitable.

"Would the stranger accompany him to his hut?"

"It would give me pleasure, but it is growing late."

"We are poor, but we could give you milk and cheese. You would be welcome."

"I know it. Like you, I love the forest and the mountain, the shade and the sunshine; but yours must be a rough life."

"It is our lot, and we are content. We toil not, and we love our freedom."

"It is well."

"I should like some memorial of having met you, anything to show that I have talked with an Englishman."

My friend rapidly dashed off a slight sketch, a rough portrait, I think, of his gaunt visitor — no bad subject for the pencil.

"I would rather it had been your own portrait; but I shall keep it in remembrance of you."

And so they parted; the civilised man to tell his little story of human feeling and native intelligence, "spending

their sweetness in the desert air," — the shepherd to relate his adventure over the watchfire, and perhaps draw forth from some sexagenarian herdsman his boyish recollections of the fall of San Fiorenzo and Bastia, and the march of the English red-coats over the mountains.

CHAP. XII.

Chain of the Serra di Tenda. — A Night at Bigorno. — A Hospitable Priest. — Descent to the Golo.

AFTER crossing for some distance an elevated plateau of this wild country, we came to a boundary wall of rough boulders, and turned to take a last view of the gulf ofSan Fiorenzo and the blue Mediterranean. A heavy gate was swung open, and, on advancing a few hundred yards, the scene suddenly changed. We found ourselves on the brink of a steep descent, with a sea of mountains before us, branching from the great central chain, and having innumerable ramifications. This part of the chain is called the Serra di Tenda; and its highest peak the Monte Asto, upwards of 5000 feet above the level of the sea, rose directly in front of our point of view. A single altar-shaped rock crowned the summit, from which the continuation of the ridge, right and left, fell away in a singularly graceful outline, the face of the mountain being precipitous with escarped cliffs. In other parts of the line, the summits were sharply serrated. Northward it was lost in the far distance among clouds and mist, but to the south-west of Monte Asto a similar, but more blunted, peak towered above all the others. I observed on our maps

that several of the summits in this range have the name of *Monte Rosso;* and the centre of the group was indented by a deep gorge richly wooded, as were other ravines, and forests hung on some of the mountain sides.

We were struck with the extraordinary warmth of colouring which pervaded the surface of the vast panorama, the slopes as well as the precipitous cliffs. They had the ruddy hue of the inner coating of the ilex bark, with a piece of which we compared it on the spot. Again, I felt convinced that this colouring was not merely an atmospheric effect, — though doubtless heightened by the bright sunshine through so pure a medium as the mountain air — but that the brilliance indicated the nature of the formation. Whether it was granitic or porphyritic, I had no opportunity of examining, but incline to think it belonged to the latter.

Of the general features of the geological system of Corsica, an opportunity may occur for taking a short review. Our present position, embracing so vast an amphitheatre, was excellent for forming an idea of the physical structure of this lateral branch from the central range. Various as were its ramifications, appearing sometimes grouped in wild confusion, the general unity of the whole formation, both in colour and form, was very observable, from the loftiest peak to the offsets of the ridge which gradually descended to the level of the valleys, just as the peculiar character of a tree runs through its trunk and boughs to the minutest twig. Through a gorge to the northward we traced the pass, the Col di Tenda, the summit being 4500 feet, through which a road is conducted to Calvi and l'Isle Rousse, on the western coast; while immediately under us lay the valley through which the

Golo, rising in the central chain, makes its long and winding course to the *littorale*, eastward.

The bason, on which we now looked down, was distinguished by the same features as that of Oletta, — gentle hills, wooded slopes and glens, and olive groves, vineyards, and orchards, in almost equally exuberant richness. A dozen villages were within view, crowning, as usual, the tops of the hills, or perched far up the mountain sides. Of these, Lento and Bigorno are the most considerable, although Campittello gives its name to the canton. The strong position of Lento caused it to be often contested during the wars for Corsican independence, and it was General Paoli's head-quarters before his last and fatal battle.

We selected Bigorno, a small village, as our quarters for the night. The descent to it, about 1000 feet from the level of the sheep-walks, is extremely rapid; the village itself being still many hundred feet above the banks of the Golo, which is seen pouring its white torrent several miles distant. The approach was interesting, winding through the evergreen copse and scattered ilex, with the sound of the church-bell at the *Ave-Maria* rising from below in the still air as we descended the mountain side.

Our quarters here were the best we had yet met with. My companion having staid behind to sketch the village, and taken shelter from a shower of rain, had been courteously invited by a gentleman, who passed, to accept the accommodations of his house for the night, but, in the meantime, Antoine had conducted me and the baggage to another house. It belonged to a small proprietor, who was profuse in his politeness, but, we thought, lacked the really hospitable feeling we had found in houses of less preten-

sions. Curiosity or civility brought about us quite a *levée* of the better class while we were arranging our toilet. The supper was execrable, consisting of an *olla podrida* of ham, potatoes, and tomatoes stewed in oil and seasoned with garlick, and the wine and grapes were sour. However, we had excellent beds. In my room there was a small collection of books, on a dusty shelf, which I should not have expected to find in such hands. Among them were some old works of theological casuistry, Metastasio, a translation of Voltaire's plays, and a geographical dictionary in Italian. I learnt that they had belonged to the proprietor's uncle, a *medico* at Padua, and were heirlooms with his property, which our host inherited. The position of these small proprietors is much to be pitied. By great penuriousness they contrive to make a poor living out of a vineyard and garden with a few acres of land, having neither the spirit nor industry, and perhaps very little opportunity, to better their condition. There was evidently some struggle in the mind of our host between his poverty and gentility — added to what was due to the national character for hospitality — when we came to proffer some acknowledgment for our reception. It was just an occasion when, travelling in this way, one is rather puzzled how to act, but we were relieved from our difficulty by finding that our offering was received without much scruple.

Next morning, to my great surprise, for I was too sleepy to notice it on going to bed, I found a gun standing ready loaded on one side of the bed, in curious contrast to the crucifix and holy-water pot on the other, — succour close at hand against both spiritual and mortal foes. We had walked through the country without any alarm, and

concluded that the reign of the rifle and stiletto was ended in Corsica. But how came the gun to be loaded? was it from inveterate habit even now that fire-arms were proscribed, or was Louis Napoleon's decree still eluded?

I shall never forget the view from my chamber windows as I threw open the long double casement at six o'clock in the morning. It was my first view of Monte Rotondo, the loftiest of the Corsican mountains. A long ridge and its crowning peak were capped with snow. The range to the eastward was in deep shade, but with a rich amber hue behind them as the sun rose. I watched its kindling light as it touched the snowy top of Monte Rotondo, and spread a purple light over the sides of the eastern ridge. The night mists had not yet risen from the valley of the Golo. We hastened to descend towards it, after the usual small cup of *café noir* and a piece of bread. The environs of Bigorno on this side are very beautiful. Groves of olive with their silvery leaves and green berries not yet ripened mingled with vines planted in terraces, the vines festooning and running free, as one sees them in Italy. Gardens full of peach and fig trees filled all the hollows — a charming scene through which the path wound down the hill. Antoine brought us fresh figs from one of the gardens — a relish to the dry remains of our crust. Before the sun had gained much elevation, it became exceedingly warm on a southern exposure; the green lizards darted from crevices in the vineyard walls, all nature was alive and fresh, and the air serene, with a most heavenly sky.

All this was very delightful. Nothing can be more so than this style of travelling in such a country, with a friend of congenial spirit and taste. My companion was

very well in this respect; but, as I before observed, his genius led him to be rather excursive in his rambles, so that he was sometimes missing when he was most wanted. Now, we had just started on this very agreeable morning walk with the prospect of breakfast in due time at the post-house on the banks of the Golo. But, instead of our enjoying this together, my friend, by a sudden impulse, leaped over a vineyard wall, and saying he should like to take a sketch from that point, desired me to saunter on, and he would soon overtake me.

What with a Pisan campanile, a Corsican manse, festooning vines, a cluster of bamboo canes—indicative of the

NEAR BIGORNO.

warm south—and the group of mountains with the truncated peak in the distance, a very clever sketch was pro-

duced, though not one of my friend's best; — and I have great reason to be obliged to him for his sketches, without which I fear this would be a dull book. At that moment, indeed, I would have preferred his companionship. However, bating this feeling and a certain hankering for my breakfast in the course of a two hours' walk, I trudged on alone in a very pleasant frame of mind. Nothing could be more charming than the green slopes round which the path wound, with occasional glimpses of the Golo beneath, — its rapid stream white as the milky Rhone, — after leaving behind the orchards and gardens. The rest of the descent lay through evergreen shrubbery so frequently mentioned, and a more exquisite piece of *máquis* I had not seen. Thus sauntering on, sometimes talking with Antoine, a species of shrub, which I had not much observed before, attracted my particular attention among the arbutus and numerous other well-known varieties. It was a bushy evergreen, of shapely growth, five or six feet high, with masses of foliage and clusters of bright red berries, having an aromatic scent.

"What do you call this shrub, Antoine?" plucking a branch.

"*Lustinea;* the country people express an oil from the berries for use in their lamps."

"Ah! I perceive it is the *Lentiscus.*" In Africa and the isle of Scios they make incisions in the stems, from which the gum mastic is procured. The Turks chew it to sweeten the breath. It grows also in Provence, Italy, and Spain.

Presently, I sat down on a bank, casting anxious glances up the path after my friend, and, basking in the sun, finished Antoine's basket of figs, which only whetted my

appetite, while I was endeavouring to indoctrinate Antoine with the persuasion that our countrymen in general are neither "*Calvinistes*" nor "*Juives.*" Antoine, who had been asking a variety of questions about "*Inghilterra*" and "*Londra,*" was not better informed on this subject than a great many foreigners I have met with in Catholic countries, who, by the former term, class all Protestants with the Reformed churches of the Continent. I have often had to inform them, to their manifest surprise, that we have bishops, priests and deacons, cathedrals, choirs, deans and canons, vestments, creeds, liturgies and sacraments, in the English church, and were, in short, very like themselves, at least in externals. Matters of faith I did not feel inclined to meddle with.

The discussion ended as we struck the level of the valley of the Golo, not far from Ponte Nuovo. The heat in this deep valley became suffocating, and the dusty high road was an ill exchange for the fresh mountain paths. Here, then, I made a decided halt, and this being the battle-field on which, in 1769, the French, after a desperate struggle, gained a decisive victory over General Paoli and the independent Corsicans, I had just engaged Antoine in pointing out the positions of the two armies, and tracing the tide of battle which, they say, deluged the Golo with blood and corpses for many miles, — when my lost companion came rushing down the hill-path among the rustling evergreens.

"You have been waiting long — excuse me; I have had a little adventure. That has detained me."

"Humph!" My friend's sketching propensities often led him into a "little adventure," ending in a story which, I should almost have imagined, he coined for a peace-offer-

ing, but that I had chapter and verse for the main incidents. There was that story of his being kicked off the mule, and — only the evening before — his *rencontre* with the interesting young shepherd.

"What now?"

"But you want your breakfast."

"I should think I do."

"I have had mine."

"The deuce you have, you are luckier than I am."

"Now, my dear old fellow, we will push on to Ponte Nuovo, and you will soon get your's. I really am very sorry, but I could not help it."

"But this is the famous battle-field, you know, and Antoine was just going to describe it."

"That will keep. We will make our *reconnaissance* after you have had your breakfast. As we go along, I will tell you how I got mine."

The story shall be told as nearly as possible in my friend's own words.

"After you left me, I sat down to sketch in a little terraced garden, shaded by fig-trees and vines. My sketch was nearly finished, and I was thinking how I should overtake you, when a bright-eyed young maiden came up, and, with the childlike wonder of a race of people living far out of the track of sketching tourists, asked me 'what I was doing.'

"'Sit down, pretty maiden, and you shall see.'

"She obeyed with a *naïve* simplicity, and we soon prattled away, she telling me that she had never gone beyond the neighbouring villages, and could not understand how I should come so far from *Inghilterra*, a

country she had never heard of, to draw pictures of their wild mountains.

"'Ah! you cannot comprehend how it is that I love your wild mountains, and children of nature like yourself.'

"'Will you come again?'—a question put with a spice of *espièglerie* which, from some other pretty lips, would be rather flattering. 'Yes, you will come again, and I shall be grown up.'

"She did not seem, I found, quite pleased at being called '*mon enfant*' by a young stranger, though it was all very well from her uncle, who, I learnt, was the priest of the church in my sketch. Presently, away she ran, blushing and smiling, to tell her uncle that there was a traveller come from a far-off land who must be hungry, and who must eat and rest under their roof.

"The good priest received me with much *empressement*, having been brought out to meet me by the little Graziella, as I was following the path to the cottage door.

"'Ah! you are English, you are a Protestant, no doubt. It matters not; the stranger is welcome under my humble roof were he a Jew or a Turk. We are all brothers.'

"I found the priest well informed on English affairs, into which, and matters connected with them, we soon plunged. Meanwhile, Graziella, with the assistance of a hard-faced but kindly old crone, prepared a repast of fruits, eggs, coffee; and the priest brought out a bottle of wine, the produce of his own vineyard, which I have seldom found equalled. It was all very appetising. I only wished you were there."—

"I was just then, curiously enough, indoctrinating

Antoine, nothing loath, with the priest's sentiment of universal brotherhood, a simple Gospel truth, which, overlaid with ecclesiastical systems, never took deep root, and is sadly out of vogue now-a-days. I imagine we shall find the Sards far more bigoted than their neighbours here."

"And you were doing your good work, fasting, while I feasted. It was all tempting, but I was puzzled how to eat my egg; there were no spoons."

"Why not ask for one; you were talking French? Had you been attempting Italian, you might have stuck fast. *Cucchiaio* is one of the most uncouth words in that beautiful language. Well I remember it being one of the first I had to pronounce, when, in early days, I got out of the line of French *garçons: cuc — cucchi,* — give me our Anglo-Saxon monosyllables for such things as spoons, knives, and forks, — at last I blurted out *cucchiaio,* in all its quadrosyllabic fulness. The Rubicon was passed (by the way, it was on the *carte* of my route); after that I stuck at nothing, though for some time it was the *lingua Toscana — in bocca — Inglese.* — But how did you manage your egg?"

"Why, it is good manners, you know, to do at Rome as others do, so I watched the priest. He removed the top, as we do, and then very nicely sipped the contents of the shell, which — charming Graziella! excellent *duenna!* — were done to a turn, just creamy."

"Ah! I perceive it was suction, a primitive idea, when spoons were not. Now I understand the old proverb about not teaching our venerable progenitors 'to suck eggs.'"

"Old fellow, cease your banter, or I shall never get to the end of my story. As to the eggs, I did not manage

mine as cleverly as the priest did his. I made a mess of it, bestowing good part of the yolk on my moustache, much to Graziella's amusement. I perceived she could hardly refrain from tittering. But she was soon sobered, — the conversation turning on the last days of Corsica — and tears came in her eyes. Alas! the ruthless spirit of *rendetta* in this wild country had cost her the lives of her father and brothers; and, her mother being dead, she was left an orphan under the care of the good priest."

"'Uncle, persuade him to stay, if only for another hour. I should like to hear more of those countries where there is no *vendetta;* where they plough and reap and dwell in safety; where fathers and brothers are not compelled to flee from their villages to the wild *máquis* and the mountain crags.'

"'My pretty child, I cannot stay now. Perhaps some day I may return.'

"'*Addio!* then. *Evviva! Evviva!* In two years I shall be grown up, and uncle will no longer call me child, and you shall tell me more of lands I shall never see. But ah! I know it will never be. *Bon voyage!* Forget not the priest's home among the mountains of Corsica.'

"I shall not forget it. How often one says hopefully 'I will come back,' when it would be idle ever to expect it; and yet I would wish to see once more the little girl who said, 'Come, if it is but for an hour!'

"I rushed down the mountain side, and found you scorched with a burning sun, thirsty, breakfastless, — the very image of the knight of the woeful countenance, — I all joy and fun with my morning's adventure, you perplexed, out of patience, hungry, and tired. I cannot help laughing at the contrast."

CHAP. XIII.

Ponte Nuovo. — The Battle-field. — Antoine's Story.

HALF an hour's walk along the high-road brought us to the solitary building of which we were in search. Uniting the character of an *albergo* and a fortified post, of which there are several scattered throughout the island on commanding spots, the loop-holed walls, with projecting angles for a cross-fire; and the barrack round a court within, still occupied by a small party of *gendarmes*, were striking mementos of the state of insecurity in Corsica, and what travelling was at no very distant period. Shut in by the mountains, the air of the valley is close and stifling, disease marked the countenances of the few inmates, and the barrack-room into which we climbed, with its benches and tables, were all miserably dirty. The promise of a dish of fresh trout from the Golo was a redeeming feature in the aspect of affairs to one who had waited long, and walked far, without his breakfast. But the dish reeked as if the Golo ran oil, and the fish were still floating in the unctuous stream, spite of my injunctions to the weird priestess of the mysteries of the cave beneath — "*Senza olio, senza olio,*" reversing the phrase in the Baron de Grimm's story of the Frenchman, who, having sacrificed

his own *goût* to his guest's *penchant* for asparagus *au naturel*, on his friend's falling down in a swoon, rushed to the top of the staircase, shouting to his cook, "*Tout à l'huile, tout à l'huile.*"

We stood on the bridge of Ponte Nuovo, just beneath the post, the scene of the last struggle for Corsican independence; and there Antoine pointed out the details. The Corsicans, under Pascal Paoli, having occupied the strong position in the Nebbio through which we had been rambling for the last few days, the Count de Vaux, the French generalissimo, concentrated his forces, amounting to forty-five battalions, four regiments of cavalry, and a powerful artillery, determined to crush Paoli's brave but ill-organised militia, and finish the war by a single blow. The French commenced the attack on the 3rd of May, 1769. For two days it was an affair of outposts, but, on the 3rd, De Vaux pressed Paoli with such vigour in his fortified camp at Murato, that the Corsican general was forced to retire beyond the Golo. He established himself in the *pieve* of Rostino, a few miles above the bridge, leaving orders for Gaffori to hold the strong heights of Lento, while Grimaldi was to defend Canavaggia, — two points by which the French might penetrate into the interior. Bribed by French gold, Grimaldi — "*Ah! il traditore!*" exclaimed Antoine,—and Gaffori, unmindful of his honourable name, offered no resistance to the advance of the French.

On the 9th of May, the militia left by Paoli to defend the passes into the valley, finding themselves unsupported, abandoned their posts and fled.

"Down the pass we descended this morning from Bigorno," said Antoine, "through those other gorges you

see in the mountains, our people poured in wild confusion, closely pursued by the enemy. They thronged to the bridge. It was held by a company of Prussians, who had passed from the Genoese to the Corsican service; and a thousand Corsican militia lined the river bank. If the French carried the bridge, all was lost. The Prussians were the only regular troops in Paoli's army. They stood firm in their discipline. The fugitives threw themselves upon them, charged with the bayonet by the French in the rear. The Prussians had to hold their position against friends and foes, indiscriminately, after a vain attempt to rally the flying Corsicans. Unfortunately they fired into the mass. A cry of 'Treachery!' was raised, the panic became general, disorder spread throughout the ranks, the enemy profited by it to secure their victory; the rout was complete, and the Corsicans scattered themselves among the mountains and forests. The Golo was red with blood, and the corpses of my countrymen, mingled with their enemies, floated in its current for many miles. It was a day of woe, a fatal day!"

The feeling of nationality still lingers in Corsica, though without an object, without a hope. Men such as Antoine, the mountaineers, the shepherds, — all true-hearted Corsicans treasure up the traditions of former times, and, with the scene before his eyes, Antoine traced the action of Ponte Nuovo with as lively an enthusiasm, as deep an interest, as if it had been an affair of yesterday, in which he had borne a part.

But the vision passed away. Antoine had pressing cares of immediate interest, to which he now gave vent. Here we were to part; we had an opportunity of forwarding our baggage to Corte by the *voiture* which daily

passes Ponte Nuovo, and there was no further need of the services of Antoine and his mule. He would gladly have followed our steps to the extremity of Corsica—to the end of the world, and we were sorry to part from him. Short as our acquaintance was, he had become attached to us. Our rambles had brought us into close intimacy, and suited his taste.

We sat down on the river bank, and he unbosomed his mind more freely than he had yet done. We learnt, on our first acquaintance, that he had left his country and sailed to foreign parts. What forced him to emigrate had been inferred from a fearful disclosure to which no reference had been since made. Now, on the eve of parting, he told us all his story, and opened out his hopes for the future. For reasons into which we did not inquire, there seemed to be no apprehensions as to his personal safety; but, lamenting the want of means and opportunity for bettering his condition at home, his thoughts again reverted to emigration. It was the best thing he could do; and, reminding him of the success of many of his neighbours from Capo Corso, who sought their fortunes in South America, we exhorted him not to indulge the indolence natural to his countrymen, but apply himself manfully to an enterprise for which he had many qualifications, and heartily wished him success.

The point on which his story turned was, as I suspected, a tale of love, jealousy, revenge. He related the catastrophe with more than usual feeling, but without any seeming remorse. He was justified by the Corsican code of honour. The details, though simple, might be worked up into one of those romantic and sentimental tales for which Corsican life supplies abundant materials. But

neither is that my *rôle*, nor am I willing to betray Antoine's confidence. My readers shall have, instead, a similar tale — of which, as it happens, a namesake of Antoine is the hero — developing the same powerful passions. It is not one of the stock stories borrowed from books which one finds repeated in writers on Corsica, but, I believe, from the source from which I derived it, an original as well as authentic tale. The scene lies at a village in the mountains, not far from Ponte Nuovo, our present halting-place.

CHAP. XIV.

FILIAL DUTY, LOVE, AND REVENGE: A CORSICAN TALE.

On a fine spring morning, some thirty years ago, there was an unusual stir in a *paese* standing near the high-road between Bastia and Ajaccio. The village, like most others in Corsica, clustered round a hill-top, and stood on the skirts of a deep forest, with which the eye linked it through intervening groves of spreading chestnut and other fruit-trees. It was Sunday; and, after mass, the whole population flocked to the market-place, a large open area in front of the *Mairie*, to witness one of those trials of skill in shooting at a mark, formerly common in Corsica as well as in Switzerland.

Above the roof of the *Mairie* sprung a grim tower, serving at once for a prison, in which criminals were confined, and for the barracks of the *gendarmerie* stationed in that wild district. On the present occasion the target was set up at the foot of this tower, and all the young men of the village were, in turn, making a trial of skill with their long guns, while the old peasants stood near giving advice, and the village girls, ranged in *costume de fête* round the palisades inclosing the place, rewarded the most successful of the competitors with smiles and glances of encouragement.

The contest had lasted for some time, and many shots

were fired without the mark — fixed at the distance of about 300 paces — having been hit, when a young man, armed with a short Tyrolese rifle, came up to the barrier. He was dressed after the fashion of his fathers, but with great neatness. Short breeches of green velvet descended to the knees, and the calves of his legs were encased in deer-skin gaiters fastened by metal buttons. A broad belt of red leather girded his loins. It concealed a small pouch of cartridges, but the hilt of a strong dagger peeped from underneath the belt. His open shirt exposed to view a manly breast. He wore a sort of jacket of the same stuff as the breeches, but faced with crimson, and garnished, after the Spanish fashion, with a number of small silver studs. A high-crowned hat of black felt was cocked jantily on one side of his head, and a medallion of the *Madre dei Dolori* stuck in the band, completed the picturesque costume of the Corsican peasant.

The young man, on his arrival, received a cordial welcome from all the competitors for the honours of the day, and, among the village maidens, many a bright eye beamed with a tender but modest delight on his manly form, shown to advantage in the national costume. Still he gave no sign of an intention to take any part in the sport for which they were assembled.

In consequence, after a short interval, during which the firing had ceased, an old villager thus addressed him:—

"How is it, Antonio, that you, the best marksman in the village, have joined us so late? The sport flags; let us have one of your true, unerring shots."

"Excuse me, father Joachimo, I am in no humour to-day to partake in the gaiety of my friends."

Pressed, however, by repeated entreaties, the young

man at last yielded, and, advancing to the barrier, and unloosing his rifle from the slings, took a cartridge from his pouch, and proceeded to charge his piece with much deliberation. While doing this, his eyes were fixed on a crevice in the tower, from which was hanging a little iron cage containing the mouldering remains of a human skull. At this spectacle his countenance changed from its usual ruddy hue to a mortal paleness, and tears were seen to fill his eyes.

Having charged his rifle, Antonio took his position in the attitude of firing; but, it was remarked, that in taking aim, he levelled the barrel higher than the mark at the foot of the tower. A moment of solemn silence was followed by a flash, a sharp crack, — and the whizzing bullet struck the skull in the cage. The shock brought both to the ground, and, at the same instant, the young man, quick as thought, leaped over the palisades, and, gathering up the fragments of skull, quickly disappeared. The spectators of this strange scene asked each other what it meant; and, in the midst of the hubbub, Joachimo, the old peasant who had invited Antonio to try his skill in the feat of arms, raised his voice to satisfy their curiosity.

" My children," he said, " Corsican blood has not degenerated; of this you have witnessed a striking proof in the act of Antonio. The skull, which hung on the tower wall, was that of a man unjustly condemned to death, of a man whose only crime was, his having taken vengeance with his own hand for the insult offered his wife by an inhabitant of the continent. The skull was that of Antonio's father; and a son, a true Corsican, could not submit to having his father's remains dishonoured. This day he has wiped out the ignominy, — henceforth Antonio is an outlaw, pro-

scribed by the men of law, by the French; but we Corsicans shall ever esteem him a man of honour and of courage."

The crowd then dispersed, full of admiration for the brave Antonio, and the event of the morning became the theme of the evening's conversation in all the families of the neighbourhood.

Meanwhile Antonio, having gained the forest, rapidly threaded its tangled paths for nearly an hour. He then stopped in one of its deepest recesses, and, having keenly reconnoitred every avenue of approach, threw himself weary at the foot of a tree, and opening the handkerchief in which he had wrapped his father's skull, gave vent to a flood of tears.

"Oh, my father!" he said, "my father! why could I not take vengeance on the authors of your death? why could I not avenge myself on the descendants of the base Frenchman who insulted my mother? why could I not wash out, in their blood, the shame that has fallen on our family, and embittered our existence?"

At the thought of vengeance the eyes of the young islander flashed fire, his tears dried up, and that heart, just now so open to tender emotions, would have prompted him to plunge his dagger in the bosom of those who were the cause of his misery.

Again, the fit changed; for, in the midst of this storm of passion, a name quivered on his lips, like the star seen in the drifting clouds when the tempest is raging.

"Madaléna!" he cried, "all is now finished between us;—Antonio is a bandit."

Then, exercising a strong power over himself, he passed his hand over his forehead, as if to drive evil thoughts

from his brain, and, unsheathing his strong dagger, dug a hole at the foot of the oak, in which he deposited his precious burthen. A cross, carved by his dagger on the trunk of the tree, served for a memorial of his father's fate: — ah! what thoughts, what sorrows, did that cross recall to his mind! — and, after a short prayer, he hastened from the spot which had witnessed his last act of filial duty.

Wretched Antonio! a solitary outcast, abandoned by all, what refuge was left for you but the forest and the *máquis?* — what protector, but your good rifle — what hope, but in the grave! Nay, another passion, another image, was deeply graven on his heart! Love — that divine passion, which ennobles a man, which gives him courage, which fills him with heroism — afforded him strength to survive so many calamities.

Some days after these occurrences, a young maiden crept stealthily at early dawn from among the houses in the village of Allari, fifteen leagues distant from Bastia, and gained unseen the *purlieus* of the neighbouring wood before any of the villagers were abroad. The maiden's age was about eighteen years; her step was light, her form slender and graceful; health sparkled in her dark eyes; her enterprise lent a ruddier hue to her olive skin, and a profusion of raven-black tresses floated on her shoulders, as she brushed through the evergreen shrubbery on the verge of the wood, where, concealed in the hollow of an aged chestnut tree, a young man had been waiting her arrival for upwards of an hour. This young man was Antonio, the maiden Madaléna.

On perceiving her approach, Antonio hastened to quit his hiding place, and came to meet her.

"How kind you are, Madaléna," he said: "you, so

rich, so young, so beautiful — to expose yourself for me to the cold morning air; to brave, perhaps, the anger of your parents, for one of whom you know so little.

"It is true that you told me once that you loved me; and love knows no obstacles, and makes nothing of distances. But I must not abuse your confidence. Madaléna, my bosom labours with a secret which I have too long preserved. I have done wrong; I have deceived you. I feared, I dreaded, that in disclosing it to you, I should forfeit your love, your esteem; that you would avoid me as the world does a man to whom society gives an ill name. Yes, Madaléna, you have to learn — Madaléna, hitherto I have not had the courage to tell it to you — learn that I am a . . . ."

Antonio shrunk from giving utterance to a word which would probably crush all his hopes, and break the last tie which held him to the world. So, changing his purpose, he continued in an altered tone: —

"Why should I embitter the moments which ought to be given to love? Is it not true, Madaléna, that you love me for myself? Ah! tell me that you love me, for there is great need that I should hear it from your own lips, and without this love I should be wretched indeed. Tell me that you do not want to know my past; that you love me because our hearts understand each other; because our two souls, breathed into us by the Author of our existence, were formed to love each other for ever."

Madaléna, perceiving the feebleness of her lover, took his hand, and fixing on him an eager gaze, made him sit by her side. On touching that much-loved hand, the young man started, and a sudden shivering ran through his veins. The maiden perceived it, and a gleam of satis-

faction, and almost coquetry, sparkled in her eyes. Poor woman's heart! Even in the most solemn moments she is always a coquette. Such is her nature.

"Antonio," she said, "you vow that you love me; why then hesitate to confide to me your secrets, your sorrows? Am I not some day to be your wife? I have sworn it before God and my mother, and I shall be. Why then do you defer telling me the cause of your long sufferings. I have long perceived that your heart is oppressed by some secret thought. Can it be that you are in love with another, Antonio? Tell me if it is so; you shall have my forgiveness, and I will say to the woman who is the choice of your heart, 'Love him, for he is worthy of it!' And if it were required that I should shed my blood for your happiness, I would not hesitate a single moment to make the sacrifice."

"Oh no, no, Madaléna, think not so! Do you suppose me capable of betraying you, of casting you off? I, who love you with a perfect love, a love as pure as that which makes the bliss of angels, — with which a child loves its mother? For one fond look from you I would brave the fury of men — of men and the elements. Drive this suspicion from your heart, and God grant that, when you have learnt my secret, you may continue to entertain the same sentiments towards me."

Thus speaking, Antonio drew near to the maiden, and, hiding his face in her hands, whispered in her ear: —

"Madaléna, Madaléna, I am——a bandit."

The young girl shrieked with terror, and fainted in his arms. Antonio laid her on the grass, and, having sprinkled her face with the fresh morning dew, knelt by her side. Presently, Madaléna opened her eyes, and seeing Antonio

kneeling, and still holding her hand, roused herself with a sudden effort, and, casting on him a look of mingled horror and scorn, said to him,—

"Leave me, Antonio, you make me shudder, your hands are stained with the blood of the innocent."

Antonio, crazed with love, crawled to her feet and wept; but having, after much difficulty, prevailed with her to hear him, he related to her the story of the skull, the only crime for which he was a bandit. After this explanation, Madaléna seemed to be reassured, and her lover awaited his final sentence from her lips in breathless suspense. The maiden's heart was touched by his tale, and observing him with an air of less severity, she said:—

"I am satisfied that you speak the truth; but I have a mother and father, and I think, that after this disclosure, I could never become your wife without abandoning them for ever. At this moment I am too much agitated to come to any decision; return to morrow, and you shall know my final resolve. Meanwhile, rest assured that I pity and love you still, considering you more unfortunate than guilty, and that I will either be your wife, or the wife of no other man."

Thus saying, she hastened from the spot.

Antonio saw her depart without having the courage to address to her another word. That man so brave, who knew no fear, recoiled from no danger, wept like a child. A sad presentiment told him that it was his last meeting with Madaléna, though her concluding promise tended in some degree to reassure him.

Madaléna shut herself up in her chamber and shed floods of tears — tears not of love, but of shame. For her—the daughter of a wealthy citizen of Ajaccio, brought

up in the manners, and tinctured with the prejudices of the continent, who knew nothing of the world but its empty phantoms, nor of love but its coquetry — it was disgrace to love and be loved by the son of a bandit, by one who was himself a bandit.

From that day Madaléna never returned to the wood. Every morning the unhappy Antonio retraced his steps to the place of meeting, but only to have his hopes crushed. He was forgotten, perhaps scorned. Love, the sentiment of the heart, had yielded to the influence of the frivolous ideas of society, the conventional maxims of the world. This young maiden had not the courage to affirm in the face of all, "I love Antonio, because he is not guilty of any crime; I love him because he has avenged his father, because he is a true son of Corsica." But she had not the spirit, the strength of mind, to say this. The Corsican blood had degenerated in her veins, or she would have felt that it was no crime for Antonio to achieve the removal from public view of the horrid spectacle which was a continual witness of shame and ignominy, — exposed by a relic of barbarism, called law, to the gaze and scorn of all who passed along the streets, — that no stain rested on the memory of Antonio's father, because, as a husband and a father, he had avenged the honour of his wife and his children.

A year after these events, the whole population of the village of Allari was again astir. Its only bell clanged incessantly, and gay troops of both sexes, in holiday dress, flocked through the streets in the direction of the *Mairie*. It was a bright morning of the month of April; joy floated in the air, and pleasure sparkled in every eye. Presently, a nuptial procession was formed, and took its

way towards the church. All eyes rested on the bride and bridegroom; they did not wear the Corsican dress, but adopted French fashions. Everything about them betokened wealth, and an affectation of continental manners.

As soon as the procession had entered the church, the streets became deserted; but a young man, who from an early hour had concealed himself in the cemetery, now glided round the church, casting anxious glances on every side, as if apprehensive of being discovered. His clothes, torn to tatters, his unshorn beard and long, dishevelled, hair, blood-shot eyes, and haggard countenance, betokened the extremity of anguish and want. His feet were naked, and he carried in his hand a short rifle.

Arrived at the church door, and having glanced within, he paused for a moment, leaning against the pillar. The nuptial ceremony had reached the point where the minister of God, after pronouncing the mystic words, demands of the betrothed their assent to the marriage union; when, just as the bride was in the act of uttering the word which binds for ever the destinies of both, the barrel of the rifle, held by the man stationed at the door, was levelled, and the *fiancée* fell, pierced in the breast with a mortal wound. The man, who fired, threw down his rifle, and, dashing into the church like one demented, took the dying woman in his arms, and cried, —

"Madaléna, you broke your troth to me; you rendered me desperate; we die together!"

And, unsheathing his dagger, he plunged it several times into his breast, falling on the dying woman, who opened her eyes, and, recognising her lover, expired with the name of "Antonio" on her lips.

Her betrothed was conveyed away by his relations, and the recollection of this terrible scene disturbed for a long while the tranquillity of the village. The church in which it took place was, after the catastrophe, stripped of all its sacred ornaments, and left to decay. Its ruins may still be seen on a point of rising ground, and, if an inquiring traveller takes a turn behind the church, he will find in the cemetery, on the spot where Antonio was concealed, a grave-stone inscribed with the names of Madaléna and Antonio, surmounted by a rude representation of a rifle and a dagger.

CHAP. XV.

Morosaglia, Seat of the Paolis. — Higher Valley of the Golo. — Orography of Corsica. — Its Geology.

On crossing to the right bank of the Golo at *Ponte Nuovo*, we enter the canton of Morosaglia, the former *piève* of Rostino, and the home of the Paoli family. The canton takes its present name from a Franciscan convent, still standing, and part of it used as an elementary school, founded by the will of Pascal Paoli.

It is about two hours' walk from Ponte Nuovo to the hamlet in which the Paolis were born. The house is one of those gaunt, misshapen, rude structures, built of rough stones, and blackened by age, which one sees everywhere in the mountain villages; without even glass to the windows. Standing on the craggy summit of an insulated rock, the access to it is by a rough wooden staircase. Here Pascal Paoli resided, as a simple citizen, after the manner of his fathers, polished as his manners were, and highly as he was accomplished, after he had attained to almost sovereign power. The rooms are so small that he transacted public business in the neighbouring convent of Morosaglia.

There also his brother, Clemente Paoli, had a cell to which he often retired. His was a singular character. Of

a saturnine cast of disposition, he seldom spoke to those by whom he was surrounded; a great part of his time was spent in religious observances, and in the practice of the most rigid austerities. In short, he was the monk when at home, and the most intrepid warrior when engaged with the enemy of his country. The sanctity of his private life procured him singular veneration, and his presence in battle produced a wonderful effect on the patriots. Even when pulling the trigger to destroy his enemy, he is said to have prayed for the soul of his falling antagonist.* After the fatal field of Ponte Nuovo, declining to follow his brother to England, he spent twenty years in prayer and penance in the Benedictine Abbey of Vallombrosa, that shady and sequestered retreat in the heart of the Apennines, returning to his native Corsica only to die. Such was Clemente Paoli. Of his brother Pasquale, a fitting place for some more extended notice will be found at Corte, the seat of his island throne.

The country on the right bank of the river is rugged; rude *paése* crown the heights, and the hollows are shrouded in magnificent chestnut woods. The mountains seen from beyond Bigorno shut in the valley of the Golo so closely in some places, that it is a mere defile giving passage to the river and the road. The river is a torrent, and the valley is ascended at a sharp angle. At *Ponte à la Leccia*, we recrossed to the left bank of the river; the valley expanded, and there was much cultivated land, though the soil was poor. Rounded hills in the foreground were backed by a serrated range of mountains, Monte Rotondo being just visible.

* Benson's *Sketches of Corsica*, p. 97.

Approaching now, through the high valleys, the central region of the mountain system of Corsica, this may be a proper place for a brief survey of the main features in its orography and geological structure. We have hitherto spoken of a central chain and its ramifications in a loose manner; but it would be desirable to convey more precise ideas of the structure of this mountain island; and, as the system happens to be very simple and intelligible, it affords an example, on a small scale, which may give the unscientific reader a general idea of the nature of grander operations. Having traversed the island from north to south, and from east to west, not without an eye to its general structure and composition, though making no pretensions to exact scientific knowledge, I may be able to furnish a not unfaithful digest of the observations of the foreign geologists *Elie de Beaumont*, *Raynaud*, *Gueymard* and others, as I find them quoted in Marmocchi's work.

OROGRAPHY OF CORSICA.

At first sight, Corsica presents the aspect of a chaos of mountains piled one on another, with their escarped sides rising from the sea to great elevations; but on a closer examination, and with the assistance of an accurate map, it is soon perceived that these mountains, apparently heaped up in wild confusion, are distinctly arranged in three principal directions, — from north-east to south-west, from north-west to south-east, and from north to south.

The point which forms the main link of the whole system lies high, near the snowy sources of the Golo. This elevated part of the island, with the districts immediately

surrounding it, — an Alpine and forest region in which the principal rivers and streams take their rise, — this region so sublime in its vast solitudes, so poetic, so savagely wild, so picturesque, — may be called the Switzerland of Corsica.

From this central link two great chains, forming, so to speak, the backbone of the island, diverge in opposite directions. One section, tending to the south-east, traverses the centre of the island, where the Monte Rotondo and Monte d'Oro lift to the skies their ever snowy peaks, and terminates at the Monte Incudine. This high chain throws out its longest branches to the south-west, each of them forming at its extremity a lofty promontory washed by the Mediterranean, and the successive ridges inclosing delightful and fertile valleys.

The other section of the central chain describes a curved line to the north-north-east, as far as Monte Grosso; and, over the Bevinco, links itself with the system of Capo Corso by the offsets of Monte Antonio and San Leonardo, by which latter *col* we crossed the ridge on the evening of our landing in Corsica. The spurs from this second chain take, in general, a north-west direction towards the sea. Less considerable than those connected with the first, they inclose narrower valleys, and form promontories less *saillants*, and of inferior elevation on the western coast.

The mountains of Capo Corso, extending in a chain nearly north and south, at a short distance from the east coast, form the third orographic division of the island; this chain, as observed in a former chapter, being cut by deep valleys of short extent, the channels of torrents discharging themselves into the Tuscan Sea.

Between this long chain, extending from Monte Antonio

to Monte Incudine, and the tortuous ranges detached obliquely from it, lies a central area equal in surface to a fifth part of the whole island of which it forms the heart — the interior. The general inclination of this area, with the openings of the valleys, tends to the east. It does not form one single bason, but, intersected as it is in various directions by secondary ranges, and by mountains linking the principal chain, its *contour* is composed of a series of deep and generally narrow valleys, rising one above the other. The grandest as well as the most elevated of these basons is that of the *Niolo*, the citadel of Corsica.

These lofty mountain chains, with the numerous ramifications detached from them, and extending in all directions, render the communications between one place and another, between the coasts on opposite sides of the island, extremely difficult. The passage from the western to the eastern shore can only be effected by climbing to great elevations, through long and narrow gorges, through deep ravines of savage aspect, and covered with dense forests. The Corsicans give a lively idea of some of these toilsome paths by calling them *scale*, — ladders, staircases; — and such, indeed, they are, the steps, often prolonged for miles, being partly the work of Nature, partly cut in the rock by the hand of man.

GEOLOGY OF CORSICA.

In the present state of science there can be no difficulty in ascribing the origin of the three great lines of the Corsican mountains, to which all the others are subordinate, to three vast upheavings of the soil in the direction

they take. The order of these elevations above the surface of the ancient sea thrice repeated in the long series of past ages, giving the first existence to the island, and by successive conglomerations shaping its present bold and irregular profile, may be also distinctly traced.

The masses first raised to the surface of the sea, supposed to be of igneous origin, lifted by the intense action of fire or subterranean heat from vast depths, and called by English geologists "Plutonic rocks," as differing from "Volcanic,"—these masses constitute nearly the whole south-western coast of Corsica, one half of the whole island.

If an ideal line be drawn diagonally from a point so far north-west as Cape *Revellata*, near Calvi, to the point of *Araso*, far down the south-east coast near Porto Vecchio, this primary eruption may be traced in the several ranges, perpendicular to the ideal line and parallel with each other, which descending to the sea in the direction of from north-east to south-west, terminate in the principal promontories on the western coast, and form the numerous valleys which appear in succession from the Straits of Bonifacio to the Gulf of Porto.

Thus at the earliest epoch the principal axis of the island had its direction from the north-west to the south-east. The Capo Corso of those times lifted its head above the Sea of Calvi, and who can say how far the island extended at the opposite extremity? All we know is, that the group of rocky islets called the *Isole Cerbicale*, south-west of Porto Vecchio, with the *Isola du Cavallo*, and that *Di Lavazzi* off the coast at Bonifacio; and again, the islets *Die Razzoli* and *Budelli* on the opposite side of the Straits, with the larger islands of *La Madaléna* and

Capróra, all of a similar formation with the primary Corsican range, — like detached fragments of some vast ruined structure, — appear to form the links of a chain which united Corsica with the mountain system of the north-eastern portion of the island of Sardinia.

These primitive masses are almost entirely granitic; and thus, at the epoch of its first emergence from the waters of the Mediterranean, no spark of animal or vegetable life existed in the new island.

So also one half of the masses raised by the *second* upheaval, having the same general direction, are granitic. But, as we advance towards the north-east, the granites insensibly resolve themselves into *ophiolitic* rocks, — a name given by French geologists to certain volcanic eruptions of the cretaceous era, — which are also found in the Morea.* There are but few traces remaining of this second upheaval, which evidently laid in ruins great part of the northern extremity of the former one, cutting it at right angles to the east of the Gulf of Porto. This line, ranging from the south-west to the north-east into the heart of the *Nebbio*, is broken up and destroyed through nearly its whole length.

The disorder and ruin of these several points of the original system, and the almost total destruction of its northern part, were undoubtedly caused by the *third* and last upheaval which gave the island the form it presents at the present day. Its direction was from north to south, and so long as the mass then raised did not come in contact with the land created by former upheavals, it preserved its regular line, as we find in the mountain-chain

* Lyell's *Elements*, vol. ii. c. xxxi.

of Capo Corso. But when, on emerging above the surface of the sea, this mass had to overcome at its southern extremity the resistance of the primary rocks upheaved long before, and now become hard and consolidated, — in that terrible shock, on the one hand, it changed, crushed, or ruined all that obstructed its progress, while, on the other, it varied its own direction and was itself broken up in many places, as appears from the openings of the valleys communicating from the interior with the plains of the eastern littoral and giving a passage to the torrents which fall into the sea on this coast, — the Bevinco, the Golo, the Tavignano, the Fiumorbo.

The fundamental rocks brought up by this third and last upheaval are ophiolitic, and metamorphic, or primary, limestone, overlaid in some places by secondary formations. "The granites on the west, as well as the south, of the island include some beds of *gneiss* and *schistes* at their extremities."—(*Gueymard*). Almost everywhere the granite is covered— an evident proof that the epoch of its eruption preceded that when the deposits were formed in the depths of the sea, and deposited in horizontal strata on the crystalline masses of the granite.

Masses of euritic and porphyritic rocks intersect the granites, and a distinct formation of porphyries crowns Monte Cinto, Vagliorba, and Pertusato, the highest summits of the *Niolo*, covering the granite. These porphyries are pierced by greenstone two or three feet thick, and the granites are intersected by numerous veins of amphibolite (hornblende) and greenstone, generally running from east to west.

Transition rocks, as they are called, occupy the whole of Capo Corso and the east of the island. They consist of

talcose-schiste, bluish-grey limestone, talc in beds, serpentine, black marble similar to the oldest in the Alps, quartz, feldspar, and porphyries.

The tertiary strata are only found at certain points in isolated fragments. One of these occupies the bottom of the Gulf of San Fiorenzo and part of its eastern shore. There the beds rest with a strong inclination against the lower declivities of the chain of Capo Corso, rising from upwards of 600 to 900 feet above the level of the Mediterranean, — a distinct proof that their formation at the bottom of the sea was anterior to the upheaval of that chain, and of the whole system of mountains having their direction north and south.

In the deep escarped valleys between San Fiorenzo and the tower of *Farinole*, the tertiary deposits are seen in successive layers forming beds which in some places are in the aggregate from 400 to 500 feet thick, and the calcareous beds contain great quantities of fossil remains of marine animals of low organisation, such as sea-urchins, pectens, and other shells; forming a compact mass, of which the greater part of the formation consists. The singular phenomenon of the presence of rounded boulders of euritic porphyry, resembling that of the *Niolo*, embedded in these strata, proves to a certainty that at an epoch anterior to the upheaval of the system running north and south, and of the mountains of *La Tenda* depending on it, the high valleys of the present bason of the Golo, and especially that of the Golo, were prolonged to the sea.

A *second* tertiary deposit exists near *Volpajola*, on the left bank of the Golo, nearly eight miles from the eastern coast. The beds lying horizontally are full of shells.

We find a third fragment of a tertiary formation on the part of the *littorale* stretching from the mouth of the Alistro to that of the Fiumorbo, in the middle of which stood the ancient city of Aleria. In some places these beds have been lifted without any sensible alteration of their original form of deposit in horizontal strata, and throughout they bear a close resemblance to the tertiary formation of San Fiorenzo.

A *fourth*, and more striking, example of the same formation is exhibited at the southern extremity of the island. There we find an horizontal *plateau* from 200 to 300 feet high between the Gulf of Sta-Manza and Bonifacio. The promontory on which that town and fortress stands, and the whole adjoining coast along the straits, present exactly the same appearances as the white chalk cliffs of Dover; and at the *Cala di Canetta* these calcareous rocks rise *à pic* over the sea 150 and 200 feet. There is a perfect analogy between this formation and those of San Fiorenzo and the Fiumorbo already mentioned. Only, this last contains a much greater variety of fossil remains, both animal and vegetable, consisting of lignites, oyster-shells, large pectens, operculites, and fragments of sea-urchins, polypi, &c. We shall have an opportunity of mentioning hereafter the curious caverns worn in the soft calcareous rock by the force of the waves lashing this coast with so much violence in the storms to which the Straits of Bonifacio are exposed.

Coming now to the alluvial deposits, we find them extending over the great plains on the eastern coast of the island, the *littorale* mentioned in an early chapter of this work. The plain of Biguglia, for instance, was formed by one of those vast inundations which have received the

name of diluvial currents, and swept away a great number of species of animals. In fact, we find traces of one of these inundations in a breccia formed of the fossil bones of animals in the hills near Bastia. Among these fossil bones Cuvier has remarked the head of a *lagomys*, a little hare without any tail,—a species still existing in Siberia.* It would too much lengthen these remarks were we to enter on an inquiry into the age and character of these osseous breccia, but the curious reader is referred to Lyell's "Elements"† for some interesting observations on fossil mammalia found in alluvial deposits alternating with breccia. We are not aware, however, that the hills near Bastia are connected with volcanic action as those of Auvergne, to which Mr. Lyell refers.

Indeed, in concluding this notice of Corsican geology, we have only to remark that, although Corsica has no existing volcanoes, it would appear, from fragments preserved in the cabinets of Natural History, that, here and there, a few rare traces of extinct volcanoes of very ancient date have been discovered, in the neighbourhood of Porto Vecchio, Aleria, Cape Balistro, in the Gulf of Sta Manza, and some other places.

* *Recherches sur les Ossements fossiles*, t. iv. p. 198.

† Vol. ii. c. xxxi.

CHAP. XVI.

Approach to Corte.—Our "Man of the Woods."—Casa Paoli.—The Gaffori.—Citadel.—An Evening Stroll.

At Ponte Francardo we left the valley of the Golo, and followed up a stream tributary to it, among hills and woods; being now on the outskirts of one of the great forest districts of Corsica.

When mounting the last hill in the approach to Corte we were joined by an inhabitant of the town, who at first seemed disposed to amuse himself at our expense. He was surprised, as we afterwards found, at meeting two foreigners of somewhat rough exterior, without baggage or attendance, engaged on rather a forlorn enterprise. He told us that not very long before he had met an Englishman under similar circumstances, and related some ridiculous stories respecting him. But as I do not believe that any of our countrymen have been recently tourists in Corsica, I am disposed to think that the person he made his butt was a German traveller,—a mistake we have often found occurring in our own case in remote parts of the Continent. We got, however, into conversation, and it turning on forests,—a subject on which we happened to be rather at home,—finding us to be practical people, and, much as we admired his wild country, not inclined to over-

indulgence in sentiment and romance, he altered his tone, and even went into the opposite extreme of supposing that our journey was connected with a speculation in timber. That being his hobby, we soon became great friends. He informed us that he possessed some large tracts of forest, which he should be happy to show us, and our "man of the woods" not only performed his promise, but, being a person of considerable intelligence, gave us much valuable information, and rendered us many services during our stay in Corte.

The approach to Corte on this side is sufficiently striking, though not so picturesque as from the point of view on the road to Ajaccio, from which my friend's sketch, lithographed for this work, was taken. After winding up along a steep ascent, the town suddenly burst on our sight from the summit of the ridge. Its position is admirable. Seated nearly in the centre of the island, in the heart of the elevated *plateau* described in the preceding chapter, and surrounded by lofty mountains, the passes of which admit of being easily defended, with a bold insulated rock for the base of its almost impregnable fortress, the houses of the town clustering round it, and, beneath, a valley of exuberant fertility, watered by two rivers, having their confluence just above, it seems formed to be the capital of an island-kingdom, of a nation of mountaineers. Such it was under the government of Pascal Paoli, and during the earlier period of the English occupation.

We entered the town by the Corso, its modern *boulevard*, — a long avenue planted with trees. This and a suburb beyond the castle, built down the slope of the hill towards the bridge over the Tavignano, are the only regular streets in the place. Roomy and well-furnished apartments were

found at the Hotel Paoli on the Corso, where we met with most kind treatment and excellent fare. My notes mention the mutton and trout as being of superior flavour, and a very good red wine of the country. The *confitures* — of which an *armoire* in the *salle à manger* contained great store, the pride of our hostess, and the perfection of her art — were delicious, especially one composed of slices of pear and other fruits, larded with walnuts, and preserved in a syrup of rich grape-juice. The coffee, of course, was excellent. Tea we found nowhere, except from our own packets, and made, much to the general amusement, in the coffee-pot we improvised at Bastia.

True to his appointment, our "man of the woods" called upon us after we had dined, and accompanied us to the principal *café*. It was noisy and disorderly, and we soon adjourned to the hotel and spent the evening in very interesting conversation. An excursion to his forest was arranged. He told us that it abounded in game; but it was mortifying to find that it was out of his power to afford us any sport, the prohibition to carry fire-arms being so rigorously enforced that no relaxation was allowed in favour of anyone. So the *chasse* was deferred till we landed in Sardinia.

The next morning was devoted to a survey of the town. The houses and churches are mean, the only objects of interest being the Casa Paoli and the citadel. The house inhabited by Pascal Paoli, when Corte was the seat of his government, is but little changed, though converted into a college founded by the general's will. It has an air of rude simplicity. There is still the homely cabinet in which he wrote, his library, and a laboratory. The library contained about a score of English books; but we

did not discover among them any of those presented by Boswell. In the *salle* are some second-rate paintings presented by Cardinal Fesch. The college did not seem to be flourishing. Perhaps the most curious thing in the house are some remains of the supports of a canopy for a throne, which tradition says Pascal Paoli caused to be erected in the *salle* on an occasion when his council of state met, the canopy being surmounted by a crown. If Paoli affected royalty, he received no encouragement from his council, and never sat on the throne.

Nearly opposite is an old house formerly belonging to Gaffori, one of the patriot leaders during the Genoese wars. Assaulted by the enemy during the general's absence, his heroic wife, with the help of a few adherents, barricaded the doors and windows, and, herself, gun in hand, made such a stout resistance, rejecting all terms of capitulation, and threatening to blow it up and bury herself in the ruins rather than submit, that she held it for several days against all attacks, until her husband brought a strong force to rescue her. The shot-holes made in the walls by the fire of the assailants are still pointed out.

There is another story connected with the Gaffori family, which the inhabitants of Corte relate with great pride. During the War of Independence, the general's son was carried off by the Genoese and imprisoned in the citadel of Corte, which they then held. Assaulted by the Corsicans with great vigour, the Genoese had the inhumanity to suspend the boy from an embrasure where the enemy's fire was the hottest. At this spectacle the assailants paused in their attack, till the general ordered them to continue their fire. Renucci, who works up the story in his usual florid style, makes Gaffori exclaim, "*Pera*

il figlio; pera la mia famiglia tutta, e trionfi la causa della patria." I prefer the version given me by a native of Corte, whose father was an eye-witness of the scene:—"*J'étais citoyen avant que je n'étais père.*" We shuddered as we looked up from below at the battlement from which the child was suspended. The fire was renewed with still more vigour; but the child marvellously escaped, and the garrison was forced to surrender.

A *permis* to visit the castle having been obtained from the French commandant, we climbed the rocky ascent by corkscrew steps. At present, the whole area of the rock is embraced by the fortifications which at different periods have grown round the massive citadel on its summit, founded by Vincintello d'Istria in the fifteenth century. Recently the French have cleared away some old houses within the *enceinte* to strengthen the works.

"What can be the use," I said to our conductor, "of strengthening this place now?"

"*Chi sà?*" was the short reply. Our friend, like many other Corsicans we met with, still nourished the visionary hopes which had caused his country so much blood and misery during her long and fruitless struggles for a national independence.

"*Là,*" said he, pointing to the *grille* of a dungeon, "*mon père était prisonnier.*"

On going our rounds, we came to the platform of a bastion formed on the site of some of the demolished houses.

"Here," he said, with emotion, planting his stick on a particular spot, "my mother gave me birth. Here we lived twenty-five years. She used to talk of the English red-coats and the house of King George."

It is now the residence of the family of Arrhigi, Duc de Padoue, and contains a portrait of Madame Buonaparte, Napoleon's mother, and several pictures connected with the events of the emperor's life.

One of the sketches in my friend's portfolio was taken in the recess of a bastion, and it required some manœuvring to interpose our Corsican friend's portly person between the sketcher and the French sentry, as he passed and repassed — an office which our patriotic guide performed with much satisfaction — while a liberty was taken contrary to the rules of fortified places.

CITADEL OF CORTE.

The view from the top of the citadel, the centre of so magnificent a panorama, may be well imagined. We now

commanded the confluence of the two rivers, the Tavignano and the Restonica, beneath the walls, the eye tracing up the torrents to the gorges from which they rushed, while the details of the town, the gardens, and vineyards, and the ruined convents on the neighbouring hills, were brought distinctly under view; and the mountains towered above our heads, fitting bulwarks of the island capital.

In the evening we strolled down the eastern suburb, and, crossing the bridge over the Tavignano, rambled on to the hill above, and the ruins of the Franciscan convent where Paoli assembled the legislative assembly, and in which the Anglo-Corsican parliament met while Corsica was united to England. The lithographic sketch of Corte was taken from beyond the bridge. Faithful as it is, one feels that neither pen nor pencil can do justice to such a scene. Art fails to lend the colouring of the tawny-orange vines, the pale-green olive-trees, the warm evening tints glowing on the purple hills, the mass of shade on the mountain sides first buried in twilight, the grey rocks, and, far away, aërial peaks vanishing in distance.

A pleasant thing is the evening stroll on the outskirts of town or village, where life offers so much novelty. How graceful the forms of those girls at the fountain, dipping their pitchers of antique form and a glossy green! Poising them on their heads with one arm raised, how lightly they trip back to the town, laughing and talking in the sweetest of tongues—sweet in their mouths even in its insular dialect!

A lazy Corsican is leading a goat, scarcely more bearded and shaggy than its owner. Others, still lazier, and wrapped in the rough *pelone* hanging from their shoulders like an Irishman's frieze coat, bestride diminutive mules, while

their wives trudge by the side, carrying burdens of firewood or vegetables on their heads and shoulders. Waggons, drawn by oxen and loaded with wine-casks, slowly creak along the road.

It is dusk as we lounge up the suburb, and the rude houses piled up round the base of the citadel look gloomier than ever. Light from a blazing pine-torch flashes from the door of a *cave;* it is a wine vault. The owner welcomes us to its dark recesses. Smeared with the juice of the ruddy grape, he is a very priest of Bacchus; but the processes carried on in his cave are only initiatory to the orgies. Here are vats filled with the new-pressed juice; there vats in the various stages of fermentation. Jolly, as becomes his profession, he gives us to taste the sweet must and drink the purer extract. He explains the process, and tells us that the vintage is a fair average, though the vine disease, the oïdion, has penetrated even into these mountains. *Evoe Bacche!* The fumes of the reeking cave mount to our heads, the floor is slippery with the lees and trodden vine-leaves. We reel to the door, glad to breathe a fresher atmosphere.

Calling at the *café* on the Corso, not from choice but by appointment with our "man of the woods," we find it, as before, dirty, disorderly, and noisy. Where, we ask ourselves, are the gentlemen of Corte? But what has any one, above the classes who toil for a livelihood, to do in Corte, except to lounge the long day under the melancholy elms in the Corso, and wile away the evenings by petty gambling in its wretched *cafés?*

CHAP. XVII.

Pascal Paoli more honoured than Napoleon Buonaparte. — His Memoirs.—George III. King of Corsica.—Remarks on the Union.—Paoli's Death and Tomb.

THE suppression of brigandage, security for life and property, the stains of blood washed from the soil, the shame in the face of Europe wiped out, — these are signal benefits which claim from the Corsicans a warmer homage to the younger Napoleon than they ever paid to the first of that name. Not even the honour of having given an emperor to France, a conqueror to continental Europe, enlisted the sympathies, the enthusiasm, of the islanders in the wonderful career of their illustrious countryman. A party, a faction, the Salicete, the Arena, the Bacchiochi, the Abatucci, rallied round him in the first steps of his political life, and the Cervoni, the Sebastiani, soldiers of fortune, of the true Corsican stamp, fought his battles, and were richly rewarded. Some of his countrymen, to their honour, adhered to him to the end, sharing his exile in St. Helena. But the great emperor was never popular in his own country; he neither loved, nor was beloved by, his own people. He did nothing for them, as before remarked, but construct the great national roads; and that was purely a military measure. He left them — designedly, it would

seem — to cut one another's throats, and despised them for their barbarism.

Pascal Paoli was, and ever will be, the popular hero of the Corsicans. He fought their last battles for the national independence; moulded their wild aspirations for liberty and self-government into a constitutional form; administered affairs unselfishly, purely, justly; encouraged industry, and checked outrage. He was a man of the people, one of themselves, and he never forgot it; nor have they.

In an Englishman's eyes, Pascal Paoli has the additional merit of having conceived a just idea of the advantage his country would derive from the closest union with the only European power under whose protection a weak State struggling for freedom could hope for repose. He did homage to our principles, and the public feeling was with him in England as well as in Corsica.

A work on Corsica that did not tell of banditti, that did not speak of Pascal Paoli, would fail in the two points with which the name of this island is instinctively associated. References to the great Corsican chief have repeatedly occurred in these Rambles, connected with localities, and may again. We have visited his birthplace, the scenes of his last campaign and disastrous defeat, and now the seat of his government, Corte. We must not leave it, though impatient to proceed on our journey and by no means wishing to fill our pages with extraneous matter, till we have linked together our desultory notices by a summary review of the principal occurrences in Pascal Paoli's remarkable life, and of the strange event which terminated his political career, — the creation of an Anglo-Corsican kingdom united for a time to the British Crown.

Pascal (Pasquale) Paoli was born at Rostino on the 25th

of April, 1725, being the second son of Giacinto Paoli, one of the leaders of the Corsican people in their last great struggle against the tyranny of the Genoese. Compelled by the course of events to retire to Naples in 1739, Giacinto Paoli was accompanied by his son Pascal, who, inheriting his father's talents and patriotism, there received a finished education, both civil and military. Being much about the court, the young Corsican acquired, with high accomplishments, those polished manners for which he was afterwards distinguished; and he held a commission in a regiment of cavalry, in which he did good service in Calabria.

Recalled to Corsica in 1755, at the early age of thirty, to take the supreme management of affairs in consequence of the divisions prevailing among the patriot leaders, the expulsion of the Genoese became his first duty; and he soon succeeded, at least, in freeing the interior of the island, and confining their occupation to the narrow limits of the fortified towns on the coasts. His next step was to remodel, or rather to create, the civil government; and in so doing he introduced an admirable form of a representative constitution, founded as far as possible on the old Corsican institutions. It was, in fact, a republic, of which Pascal Paoli was the chief magistrate, and commander of the forces. One of the earliest acts of his administration was a severe law for the suppression of the bloody practice of the *vendetta*, followed in course of time by measures for the encouragement of agriculture, and by the foundation of a university at Corte. The necessity of meeting the Genoese on their own element led him to get together and equip a small squadron of ships, no country being better fitted than Corsica, from its position and resources,

to acquire some share of naval power in the Mediterranean. With this squadron, after repulsing the Genoese fleet, he landed a body of troops in the island of Capraja, lying off the coast of Corsica, and succeeded in wresting it from the Republic.

Intestine divisions had always been the bane of Corsican independence, and even Paoli's just and popular administration could not escape the rivalry of Emanuel Matra, a man of ancient family and great power, who became jealous of Paoli's pre-eminence. All attempts at conciliation on the part of Paoli proving useless, Matra and his adherents rose in arms, and, calling the Genoese to their aid, it was only after a long and bloody struggle, and some sharp defeats, that Paoli and the Nationals were able to crush the insurrection; Matra falling, after fighting desperately, in the battle which terminated the war.

Pascal Paoli, being now firmly seated in power, and the island, settled under a regular form of government, growing in strength, the Genoese found themselves unequal to cope with a brave and united people. After some further ineffectual attempts, they once more applied to France for succour, and engaged her to occupy the strong places in the island, as she had already done from 1737 to 1741. French troops accordingly, landing in Corsica, established a footing which has never been relinquished, except during the short period of English occupation. But by the Treaty of Compiegne, signed before the expedition sailed (1764), the French limited their support of the Genoese to a term of four years. During that period they maintained a strict neutrality towards the Corsican Nationals, confining themselves to the limits of their occupation. Their generals maintained harmonious relations with Pascal Paoli, and,

the Genoese power in the island having shrunk to nothing, the patriots had the entire possession of the country, except the fortified places, and the Commonwealth flourished under the firm and active administration of its wise chief. It was at this time that James Boswell visited the island. Residing some time with General Paoli, and admitted to familiar intercourse with him, he collected the materials from which he afterwards compiled "An Account of Corsica, and Memoirs of Pascal Paoli," published in London in 1767, — a work, the details of which are only equalled by his *Johnsoniana* for their minute and vivid portraiture of his hero's life, opinions, character, and habits. The "Account of Corsica" has been the standard, indeed the only English, work relating to that island from that day to the present.

The time fixed by the Treaty of Compiegne for the evacuation of Corsica by the French troops was on the point of expiring. They had already withdrawn from Ajaccio and Calvi, when the Genoese, finding themselves utterly incapable of retaining possession of the island, offered to cede their rights to the king of France. This was in 1768. The Duc de Choiseul, the minister of Louis XV., lent a willing ear to a proposal which opened the way to the conquest of Corsica — a prize, from its situation, its forests, its fertility, worthy the ambition of the *Grand Monarque.* The French generals, receiving immediate orders to cross the neutral lines, soon made themselves masters of Capo Corso, and pushed their successes on the eastern side of the island.

Pascal Paoli, his brother Clemente, and the other national leaders, were not wanting in this crisis of the fate of Corsica, and the people rose *en masse* against the over-

whelming force that threatened to crush them. The war, though necessarily short, was marked by obstinate bravery on the part of the Corsicans. The French troops having met with many repulses, received a signal defeat at Borgo. There is scarcely a village in the interior that is not illustrious for its patriotic efforts at this period. Chauvelin, the French general-in-chief, was recalled, and, ultimately, the Count de Vaux, an officer of experience, took the field as generalissimo of the French army, swelled by successive reinforcements to the vast force of 40,000 men.

The great blow which decided the fate of Corsica was struck at the battle of Ponte Nuovo, of which some particulars are given in a former chapter.* This defeat entirely demoralised the island militia, and crushed Paoli's hopes of maintaining the nationality of Corsica. Retiring to Corte, and thence, almost as a fugitive, to Vivario, in the heart of the mountains, though he might still have maintained a *guerilla* warfare against the French, he resolved to abandon a forlorn hope, and, pressed by a large body of the enemy's troops, embarked in an English frigate at Porto Vecchio, with his brother Clemente and 300 of his followers.

The conquest of Corsica cost France largely both in men and money, it appearing by the official returns, that the loss sustained in killed and wounded was 10,721 men, while the expense of the war was estimated at 18 millions of livres. The fate of the Corsicans met with general sympathy. Rousseau on this occasion accused the French people of the basest love of tyranny: — "*S'ils savoient un homme libre à l'autre bout du monde, je crois qu'ils y iroient pour le seul plaisir de l'exterminer.*"

* Chap. XIII.

After a short stay in Italy, Pascal Paoli proceeded to England, landing at Harwich on the 18th of September, 1769. The succeeding twenty years of his life were spent in London. He was well received by the king and queen, and the ministers paid him the attention due to his rank and services. But, though an object of much general interest, he shunned publicity, living in Oxford Street in a dignified retirement. He joined, however, in good society, and associated with the most eminent literary men of the day, among whom it was observed that his talents and accomplishments as much fitted him to shine, as at the head of his patriotic countrymen. Boswell had the happiness of introducing him to Johnson, and revelled in the glory of exhibiting his two lions on the same stage.

The French Revolution opened the way for Pascal Paoli's return to Corsica, with the prospect of again devoting himself to the service of his country under a constitutional monarchy, the form of government he most approved. At Paris, the unfortunate Louis XVI. and his queen received him with marks of favour, La Fayette greeted him as a brother, and the National Assembly gave him an enthusiastic reception. He was named President of the Department of Corte and Commander of the National Guard.

Landing in Corsica, amidst the congratulations of his countrymen, all flocked round him, and mothers raised their babes in their arms that they might behold the common father of their country. The hopes of the Corsicans again revived; for, if they had not a national and independent government, they were members of a free state, with the man of their choice to administer affairs.

Paoli was, however, soon disgusted with the excesses of the French Revolution, and, like all citizens of distinguished merit, he fell under the suspicions of the, so-called, Committee of Public Safety. Summoned to the bar of the National Convention, and declining to appear, he was proclaimed an enemy of the Republic, and put out of the protection of the law. Preparations were made for exterminating the Paolists, who flew to arms, resolved once more to assert the nationality of the Corsican people, and throw off their dependence on France. But intestine divisions again weakened the efforts of the patriots, and Corsica was divided into two parties — the Paolists and the Republicans; the Buonaparte family at this time supporting the patriot chief.

In the face of the new invasion threatened by the French Republic, Paoli perceived that there was nothing to be done but to call the English, whose fleet hovered on the coast, to the aid of the Nationals, and place the island under British protection. The firstfruits of this alliance were the reduction of San Fiorenzo and the surrender of Bastia to the bold attack of Nelson already described.* The fall of these fortresses was succeeded by the siege of Calvi, in which Nelson also distinguished himself; and on the reduction of that place — Ajaccio and Bonifacio being already in the hands of the patriots — the French troops withdrew from the island.

Corsica being once more free to establish a national government, the representatives of the people, assembled in a convention at Corte on the 14th of June, 1794, accepted a constitution framed by Pascal Paoli, in conjunction with Sir Gilbert Elliot, the British Plenipo-

* See Chap. XI.

tentiary. By this national act the sovereignty of Corsica was hereditarily conferred on the King of Great Britain with full executive rights; the legislative power, including especially the levying of taxes, being vested in an assembly called a parliament, composed of representatives elected in the several *pièves* and towns. All Corsicans of the age of twenty-five years, possessed of real property (*beni fondi*), and domiciled for one year in a *piève* or town, were entitled to vote at the elections. The king's consent was required to give force to all laws, and he had the prerogative of summoning, proroguing, and dissolving the parliament. A viceroy, appointed by the sovereign, with a council and secretary of state, were to execute the functions of government. The press was to be free. In short, the kingdom of Corsica—so called even under the dominion of the Genoese Republic—was to be a limited monarchy, with institutions nearly resembling those of Great Britain, except that there was no House of Peers.

The subject has some interest, even at this present day, as showing how the principles of a limited monarchy were adapted by such a man as Pascal Paoli to a *quasi*-Italian nation, than which none could be more ardent in their love of freedom, or have made greater struggles in its cause. The Constitutional Act* will be found in the appendix to Mr. Benson's work. It is curious also to find

* The article of the Constitutional Act, vesting the sovereignty of Corsica in the king of Great Britain, runs as follows:—

"Il Monarca, e Rè della Corsica, è sua Maestà Giorgio III., Rè della Gran-Bretagna, e li de lui Successori, secondo l'ordine della successione al trono della Gran-Bretagna."

The oath sworn by the king on accepting the crown and constitution of Corsica was to the following effect:—

that in the time of our George III. a kingdom in the Mediterranean was as closely united to the Crown of Great Britain, as the kingdom of Ireland was at that time.

Sir Gilbert Elliot was appointed viceroy. Unfortunately, with the best dispositions, his government was not administered with the tact required to conciliate so irascible a people as the Corsicans. While the viceroy was personally esteemed and beloved, he pursued a course of policy little calculated to calm the irritation which speedily arose. Pascal Paoli felt disappointment at not having been nominated viceroy, and was suspected of secretly fomenting the disaffection to the government. So far from this, he published an address to his countrymen, endeavouring to allay the ferment, and induce obedience to the English authorities. Jealousy, however, of his great and well-earned influence over the Corsicans

"Io sotto scritto Cavaliere Baronetto, &c., &c., Plenipotenziario di S. Maestà Britannica, essendo specialmente autorizzato a quest' effetto, accetto in nome di sua Maestà GIORGIO III., RÈ DELLA GRAN-BRETAGNA, la corona e la sovranità della Corsica secondo la Costituzione, &c., questo giorno dicianove Giugno (1794). E giuro in nome di SUA MAESTÀ di mantenere la libertà del popolo Corso, secondo la Costituzione e la Legge.

"(Sottoscritto) ELLIOT."

The oath of the president and deputies: —

"Io giuro per me, ed in nome del popolo Corso che rappresento, di riconoscere per mio Sovrano e Rè sua Maestà GIORGIO III., RÈ DELLA GRAN-BRETAGNA, di prestargli fede ed omaggio, secondo la Costituzione," &c.

Compared with the original,

PASQUALE DI PAOLI, *Presidente.*
CARLO ANDREA POZZO-DI-BORGO,
GIO. ANDREA MUSELLI, } *Segretarj.*

The oath of allegiance was to be taken by all Corsicans in their respective communities. — *Benson's Sketches in Corsica*, pp. 193—195.

appears to have led to his removal from the island. Towards the close of the year 1795 the king's command that he should repair to England was conveyed to him, couched, however, in gracious terms. He immediately obeyed, and arrived in London towards the end of December.

No sooner had Paoli departed than discontent assumed a more alarming form. His presence and example had kept many calm who had been secretly hostile to the English, but who now openly displayed their animosity. Petitions were presented to the viceroy by some of the leading inhabitants assembled at Bistuglio, declaring the grounds of Corsican opposition, and proposing means of conciliation; while many bodies of the disaffected assembled in the wild neighbourhood of Bocagnono. These disorders, coupled with the mutual distrust with which the Corsicans and English viewed each other, finally led to the abandonment of the island by the latter; and, accordingly, between the 14th and 20th of October, 1796, the viceroy and troops, under the protection of Nelson, embarked for Porto Ferrajo, leaving the island once more a prey to French invasion.

Foreign writers sneer at the ignorance and mismanagement which so soon alienated the minds of the Corsicans from those whom they had lately hailed as their liberators and protectors; and it may perhaps be lamented that so noble a dependency of the British Crown was thus lost. Its commanding position in the Mediterranean, its fine harbours and magnificent forests, made it a most desirable position, at least during the revolutionary war. Such was Nelson's opinion, expressed in a letter to his wife when a descent on the coast was first contemplated. Added to

these, its products of corn, wine, and oil, capable of almost indefinite augmentation under a good system of government, gave it great value as a permanent possession. What are Malta and Gibraltar? Merely rock fortresses, compared with such an island, capable of defence by the bravest people in the world, and possessed of such resources that, so far from being a burden on the finances, a very considerable surplus of the revenue now flows into the Imperial exchequer. Nothing was wanting but to reconcile the natives to the rule of their new masters, making it, as it constitutionally professed to be, national. This was doubtless a difficult task with a spirited people, alien in race, religion, and habits. The ministers of the day committed a great error in not giving the vice-royalty to Pascal Paoli. He was a thorough Anglo-Corsican, and perfectly understood the working of a constitutional government. The union had been his policy, and he alone could have carried it out.

Whether the annexation of the island to the British Empire would have survived the deliberations of the Congress of Vienna is another question. One does not see why it should not have done so. We retained the Ionian Islands, less important in many respects, and with a population as turbulent, it seems, and as alien, as the Corsicans. The possession of Corsica by the Bourbons was very recent, and acquired by the most flagrant injustice. The French were scarcely more popular than the English with the national party; nor are they, according to the impression made during our Rambles, at the present day. The island had been offered to Napoleon, and might have become his island-empire. Had it even followed the fate of Genoa, its former mistress, and been assigned to Sardinia,

there would be reason now for all friends of constitutional government to rejoice; and the Corsicans, essentially an Italian people, would more easily have amalgamated with their rulers.

However, these are mere speculations. Pascal Paoli's retirement left his native island no resource but submission to the French, and it became once more a department of France, one and undivided. On his return to England, Paoli had a small pension from the English Government, which he shared with other exiles from his own country. Little is known of the latter years of his life. He probably resumed, as far as his advanced years admitted, the habits he had formed during his former residence in London. He died there, on the 25th of February, 1807, at the age of eighty-two, and was interred in the burial-ground of Old St. Pancras. It is ground especially hallowed in the estimation of Roman Catholics; and if any reader should chance to turn his steps in that direction, he will be surprised to see what a large proportion of the monuments and gravestones in the vast area are inscribed to the memory of foreigners of all ranks, who, during a long course of years, have ended their days in London. The little antique church, too — one of the oldest, if not the oldest, in London — is well worth a visit, as an interesting specimen of Romanesque architecture, well restored a few years ago.

In the south-western corner of the churchyard, not far from the boundary wall, he will find a rather handsome tomb marking the spot in which the remains of the great Corsican are deposited. It bears on one face a long Latin inscription, said to have been penned by one of his countrymen, and the east slab bears a coronet, on what

authority we are at a loss to conceive. So also the more humble monument of Theodore of Corsica at St. Anne's, Soho, is dignified with a shadowy crown. The mock king created Giacinto Paoli, Pascal's father, and one of his first ministers of state, a marquis or count. Can it be that, under that patent, Pascal Paoli assumed the insignia of nobility in his intercourse with the courtly circles of London? Was it a weakness in the man of the people, who, simple as his general habits were, had high breeding, and, as we learn from Boswell's gossip, was not entirely free from aristocratic tendencies, — nay, is said to have aspired to a royal crown?* Or is the coronet on his tomb an unauthorised device of the officious friends who are said to have spent 500*l.* in giving the exile a pompous funeral?

Peace to his memory! In death, as in life, his heart was with the people he had loved and served so well. Still caring for their best interests, by a codicil to his will he appropriated the annual sum of 200*l.* to the endowment of four professors in a college he proposed to found at Corte. They were to teach — 1st. The Evidences of Christianity;—2nd. Ethics and the Laws of Nations;—3rd. The Principles of Natural Philosophy;—and 4th. The Elements of Mathematics. He also bequeathed a salary of 50*l.* to a schoolmaster in his native *piève* of Rostino, who was to instruct the children in reading, writing, and arithmetic. It appears to have been the object of Mr. Benson's journey to Corsica to carry into effect these wise and benevolent provisions, and Paoli's bequests to his poor relations.

* See before, p. 159.

Paoli said when dying:—"My nephews have little to expect from me; but I will bequeath to them, as a memorial and consolation, this Bible — saying, 'I have never seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging their bread.'"

CHAP. XVIII.

Excursion to a Forest. —Borders of the Niolo. —Adventures. — Corsican Pines. — The Pinus Maritima and Pinus Lariccio. — Government Forests.

Our excursion to the forest came off on the day before we left Corte, under the auspices of our "man of the woods." He procured us mules, and our hostess supplied a basket of provisions and wine; for it promised to be a hard day's work, carrying us far into the heart of the mountains.

Leaving Corte by the Corso, we soon turned up a valley to the left, winding among hills of no great elevation and cultivated to their summits. Not much farther than a mile from the town, we passed a lone house, the door of which was riddled with bullets. The brigands attacked it not long before. It was an affair, I believe, of summary justice for some trespass on property.

"No one was safe," said our conductor, "two years ago, outside the town. If you had been in the island then, you would have seen half Corsica armed to the teeth."—

"The disarming has been complete, for since our landing we have only once seen fire-arms except in the hands of the military. Then the banditti, of whom we have heard more than enough, no longer exist?"

"No; they have been shot down, brought to justice, or driven out of the island. Many of them escaped to

Sardinia; if you go there, you will find things just in the same state they were here; perhaps worse, if our outlaws are roaming there. I will tell you, some time, the story of the last of the banditti. Not far from hence they fell in a desperate conflict with the gendarmes."

The hollows between some of the hills among which we wound were embosomed in chestnut-trees, and the husks were beginning to burst and shed the nuts on the ground.

"The harvest is approaching," said our guide. "Soon every house will have great heaps gathered in for the winter's store."

We were on the borders of the mountainous district of the *Niolo*, the most primitive, not only geologically, as we have lately seen, but in point of manners, of any in Corsica. This it owes to its sequestered situation, hemmed in by the southern branch of the great central chain. It is approached by difficult paths and steps hewn out of the rock, the best being the pass of the *Santa Regina*. The interior of the bason is, however, extremely fertile. We had now in view the Monte Cinto and Monte Artica, the principal summits of the Niolo group, nearly 8000 feet high; and from part of our route Monte Rotondo was seen rising, with its snowy crest, a thousand feet higher, further to the south.

The country now assumed a wilder and more rugged character, cultivation disappeared, and the surface was either rocky or thickly covered with the natural shrubbery so often mentioned. Once more we were in the *Macchia*, threading it by a rough and narrow path. Flocks of sheep and goats were browsing among the bushes; and the sight of rude shepherds' huts, with their

blazing fires, gave us to understand that we had reached the wilds beyond human habitation. At last, a steep ascent through the thickets by a slippery path surmounted a ridge commanding the prospect of one flank of a mountain, the forest property of our "man of the woods." A furious torrent, its natural boundary, tumbled and dashed in its rocky channel far beneath. Our mules slid down the almost precipitous descent clothed with dense underwood; we forded the stream, and met our friend's forester, who was expecting our arrival, and had shouted to us as we crossed the ridge.

A storm of rain poured down in torrents while we were clambering up the opposite heights, making for shelter with as much speed as such an ascent permitted. Our place of refuge was a well-known haunt of the shepherds and banditti. It could not be called a cave, but was a hollow under a mass of insulated rock, worn away in the disintegrated granite, the harder shell of which formed an umbrella-shaped canopy, protecting us from the rain. It was miserably cold; but there were no dry materials at hand for lighting a fire, though the blackened rock and heaps of ashes and half-burnt logs looked very tempting.

Under such circumstances, the best thing to be done was to apply ourselves to the contents of Madame ——'s basket, as we had still harder work before us. The contents were just displayed when my fellow-traveller made his appearance. I had lost sight of him in the bush while hurrying on, he having dismounted, and left his mule to be led up by a shepherd. He, too, had sought shelter in the nearest rock he could find. It had a cavity with a low aperture, into which he thrust himself head-foremost. What was his surprise at beholding a pair of

eyes glaring at him through the gloom! The thing—whether it were man or beast he could not at the moment distinguish—shrunk back. He, too, recoiled and made a sudden exit. Presently he saw a pair of legs protruding on the further side of the rock, which it appeared was perforated from both extremities, and the thing, serpent-like, gradually wriggled itself out. Then stood erect, shaggy and rough as a wild beast startled from its lair, one of the shepherd boys, who had also crept into the cavity for refuge from the storm. He cast one look of astonishment at the intruder, turned round, and, leaping into the bush, disappeared without uttering a word.

"Perhaps he took you for a detective in plain clothes, conscience-struck for having assisted to harbour the proscribed brigands!"

Our meal despatched, and the weather clearing, we began clambering up a mountain side, as steep as the ridge of a house; and the mules, being useless, were sent down in charge of the muleteer to the ford of the torrent. Signor F——'s forest spread over the whole face of the mountain, and how much further he best knew. We understood that he had a larger tract in another direction.

Trackless pine forests—some belonging to the communes, others to private individuals,—clothe the lower ranges of the mountains through all this part of the island. Vizzavona, which we crossed on our way to Ajaccio, and Aitona, lying to the south-west of the Niolo, belong to the State, and the French Admiralty draw from them large supplies of timber shipped to Toulon; especially the finest masts used in their navy. The Corsican pine-forests have been famous from early times. Theophrastus* men-

* *Hist. Plant.* lib. 1, cap. 8.

tions a ship built by the Romans with this timber, of such large dimensions as to carry fifty sails; and Sextus Pompeius, seizing this island as well as Sicily and Sardinia, drew from its forests the means of maintaining his naval supremacy.

Our "man of the woods" appeared to have hardly earned, and well to merit, the noble property in the possession of which he rejoiced. Yet he described himself as poor in the midst of his seeming wealth, impoverished to get together vast tracts of country, from which, at present, he received no return. His object was to obtain a market for sale of his timber, which he said could be floated down the rivers to the sea-coast at a moderate expense. Having seen, as we had, the Norwegian timber floating down rivers, precipitated over rapids, and rafted over immense lakes, during a *flottage* to the sea which it sometimes takes two years to accomplish*, we could find no difficulty in believing that advantage might be taken of the rivers on either watershed of the central chain in Corsica, to bear this, the only wealth of these elevated regions, to the coast, which is nowhere more than about fifty miles distant. Of the anchorage and depth of water at the mouths of the rivers, I have no precise information, except so far that Signor F—— assured us there would be no difficulty in shipping his timber.

I had not counted on such an exhausting effort as climbing a thousand feet nearly perpendicular on the rocky and rugged surface of a mountain forest in Corsica demanded. Accustomed to traverse some of the finest pine-forests of Norway in a light *carriole* on excellent roads, or to canter

* See *Norway in* 1848—1849, 8vo., Longman & Co., pp. 36, 37.

along their avenues on little spirited horses, its native breed, without any feeling of fatigue, I had imagined our present enterprise to be much easier than it proved. Indeed, had it not been that the tangled roots of the pines, forming a network on the denuded surface of the rocks, afforded secure footing and a firm hold, and that, clasping the giant stems, one could take breath on the edge of the shelving cliffs, I should never have scrambled, and pulled myself, up to the summit.

Our "man of the woods," notwithstanding his great bulk, was agile as a mountain-goat, leaping from crag to crag, and striking off in every direction where he could show us trees of the largest growth. Marmocchi mentions four species of the pine in his catalogue of the indigenous trees growing in Corsica. Of two of these, *Pinus Pinea* (the stone pine), and *Pinus Sylvestris* (our common Scotch fir), I did not remark any specimens in the forests we had an opportunity of examining, nor do they equal the others in grandeur and value. But both the *Pinus Lariccio* and the *Pinus Maritima* are magnificent trees. They were mingled in the forest I am now describing, the *Lariccio* prevailing.

The *Pinus Maritima*, so well known to all travellers in Italy and Greece, and to others by its picturesque effect in the landscapes of Claude, has often its trunk clear of boughs till near the top, which spreads out in an umbrella-shaped head, with a dense mass of foliage; and, where the stem is not so denuded, the tree has the same rounded contour of boughs. Both are figured and described in Lambert's magnificent work on the GENUS PINUS; but, unfortunately, from very insignificant specimens; those of the Pinus Maritima being taken from a tree at Sion House,

only twenty feet high. The spines of the Pinus Maritima are longer than those of the Pinus Lariccio, and the branches more pensile. The engravings for the present work are from specimens brought from Corsica. Mr. Lambert's description, however, coincides with my own observations in the Corsican forests. He says:—"The branches are very numerous, and bear long filiform leaves. The cones are nearly the same size as Pinus Rigida. They are so remarkably smooth and glossy, that they at once distinguish their species. In shedding their seeds, they seem to expand very little."* Mr. Lambert considers it to be the same species as the πευκος, *Pinus Picea* of Greece, which grow on the high mountains, Olympus, Pindus, Parnassus, &c.; and quotes an extract from Dr. Sibthorp's papers, published in Walpole's *Turkey*, remarking that the πευκος furnished a useful resin, used in Attica to preserve wine from becoming acid, and supplying tar and pitch for shipping. "The resinous parts of the wood," he says, "are cut into small pieces, and serve for candles."

PINUS MARITIMA.

PINUS LARICCIO.

The *Pinus Lariccio* is more disposed to retain its lower branches than the Pinus Maritima, and has a more angular character both in the boughs and the footstalks of its tassels. The spines are shorter. The boughs slightly droop, but by no means in the degree of the spruce

* Lambert's *Genus Pinus*, vol. i. p. 13.

fir or the *larch*. From this circumstance, however, it probably derives its name, though it has nothing else in the slightest degree common with the larch; and writers who speak of the "Corsican larch" betray their readers into serious error. The Pinus Lariccio is figured in Mr. Lambert's work from two specimens in the Jardin des Plantes at Paris, about thirty feet high and three feet in girth, in 1823. Their age is not mentioned. Don, quoted in this work, remarks that "this pine is totally distinct from all the varieties of Pinus Sylvestris, with which, however, it in some respects agrees. It differs in the branches being shorter and more regularly verticellate. The leaves are one-third longer; cones shorter, ovate, and quite straight, with depressed scales, opening freely to shed the seed. The wood is more weighty, resinous, and, consequently, more compact, stronger, and more flexible than Pinus Sylvestris. Its bark is finer and much more entire."

CONE OF THE PINUS LARICCIO.

The Pinus Lariccio is also at once distinguishable from the Pinus Maritima growing in the same forest, by the bark alone. Drawings are here given of (1) the exterior and (2) interior coats, from specimens brought from Corsica. They are very thick, and peel off in large flakes, the inner layer being most delicately veined, and of a rich crimson hue.

BARK OF THE PINUS LARICCIO.

"I observed," says Mr. Hawkins, quoted by Lambert,

"on Cyllene, Taygetus, and the mountains of Thasos, a sort of fir, which, though called πευκος by the inhabitants, and resembling that of the lower regions, has the foliage much darker, and the growth of the tree more regular and straight. The elevated region on which it grew leads me to suspect it must be different from the common πευκος." * Mr. Lambert adds: — "The Pinus Lariccio is, I have no doubt, the tree here mentioned, especially as it is known to grow in Greece, and has been found by Mr. Webb near the summit of Mount Ida, in Phrygia." † We are inclined, however, to think that this remark requires confirmation by more exact details.

The Pinus Lariccio grows to a greater height than the Pinus Maritima. In this forest Signor F—— estimated some of the finest specimens of the latter at from sixty to seventy feet in length, while those of the Lariccio could not be less than 120 feet, and perhaps more, with an average circumference of about nine feet. Some little experience enabled us to confirm this estimate.

But these dimensions are often exceeded. In the neighbouring forest of Valdianello, which, again, abuts on that of Aitona, the chief of the government reserves, there lately stood a Pinus Lariccio, called by the Corsicans "*Le Roi des Arbres.*" At five feet from the ground its girth was upwards of nineteen feet. The height of the tree is not mentioned. The king of the forest is dead, but it boasts a successor worthy of its honours, the girth being, as Marmocchi relates on report, twenty-six feet at one mètre (three feet three inches) from the ground, and only reduced to twenty-one feet where the trunk is fifty-eight

* Walpole's *Turkey*, p. 236.

† Lambert's *Genus Pinus*, vol. ii. p. 28.

feet high. Its entire height is 150 feet, and its branches cover a circumference nearly 100 feet in diameter.

These dimensions are large for European pines, about averaging those of the Norwegian. Growing in a rocky soil, I can easily believe that the timber is, as represented, extremely durable. It was surprising to see in Signor F——'s forest trees of such magnitude springing from fissures in the granite cliffs, and from ledges of rocks having only a scanty covering of barren soil. The growth must be slow; by counting the rings in some of the fallen trees, I calculated that they had stood about two centuries. The choicest specimens were usually grouped on some platform, or in hollows of the precipitous cliffs. In these positions they are often exposed to the worst of enemies, such spots being the haunts of the brigands and shepherds; and it was lamentable to observe the destruction caused by their fires in all parts of the wood. Huge half-burnt logs lay at the foot of some of the finest pines, and the flames had not only scorched all vegetation within reach, but eaten into the heart of the trees.

This may be considered as one of the few virgin forests remaining in Corsica. The vast consumption by the Genoese, and afterwards by the French, governments, has greatly exhausted the forests; and it is only in the inaccessible parts of the country, where there are no roads, that timber of large dimensions is found. Even here they were felling the smaller trees, sawing them into planks, and carrying them away on mules, one plank balancing another on each side of the pack-saddle. We ventured to suggest to our "man of the woods" the advantages of sawmills, a machinery of the simplest possible construction, adopted in North America, Norway, and all forest countries,

where, as here, there is abundant water-power. All such industrial resources are wanting in Corsica, but our friend was too shrewd not to be alive to the value of the suggestion.

Our course through the forest had led us round to the flank of the mountain, shelving down to the torrent we forded on our arrival. A descent is generally considered an easy affair: so we found this in comparison with the ascent; but the declivity was formidable, there being no sort of path, and we had to work our way over and amongst huge masses of rock and slippery boulders, and jumping from crag to crag, sliding, rolling, and tumbling, not without some severe falls, we at last reached the bottom.

Remounting our mules, a very pleasant change — active, light-stepping beasts as they were,—we rode slowly on our return to Corte, often looking back at the broad forest-clad mountains, with the snowy dome of Monte Rotondo in the distance. Signor F——, anxious to supply us with all the information we required, lost no opportunity of pointing out remarkable objects.

"Do you see that *paése?*" he said, pointing to some grey buildings about five miles off, on the right bank of the Golo; "that is Soveria, the birth-place of Cervione, one of Napoleon's best generals. He fell in the battle of Ratisbon. His last words to the emperor, when ordered on a desperate attack," said our friend, with Corsican feeling "were, '*Je vous recommande ma famille.*'"

Valery relates an amusing anecdote of this General Cervione. Having the command at Rome, which he exercised with great severity, it became his duty to convey the order to Pope Pius VII. for abdicating his temporal power and being sent away, which he executed

harshly. When Pius VII. was afterwards at the Tuileries, Cervione, with other generals, came to pay him his respects. The pope, struck by his pure Italian pronunciation, complimented him on it. "*Santo Padre,*" said Cervione, "*sono quasi Italiano.*" — "*Come?*" — "*Sono Corso.*" — "*Oh! oh!*" — "*Sono Cervione.*" — "*Oh! oh! oh!*" At this terrible recollection the pope shrank aghast, hastily retreating to the fireside.

"Further on," said our conductor, "I see it plainly, there is an old grey house on the top of a rock; a poor place, but the birthplace of Pascal Paoli. He resided there after he became our chief, but would not have the home of his fathers altered."

Near Soveria is Alando, the native place of Sambuccio, the patriot leader in the first insurrection against the Genoese. All the neighbourhood of Corte is classic ground in Corsican history.

We returned there to a late dinner.

CHAP. XIX.

The Forest of Asco. — Corsican Beasts of Chase. — The Moufflon. — Increase of Wild Animals. — The last of the Banditti.

Our good "man of the woods" joined us at dinner. It was a just source of pride to him that he had shown his magnificent forest to foreigners as enthusiastic as himself, and who might, perhaps, forward his designs for making it profitable. In this view he now wrote the subjoined particulars.*

* "Forêt d'Asco en Corse.

"La Forêt d'Asco est située dans l'arrondissement de Corte. Elle est traversée par une rivière au moyen de laquelle on pourrait l'exploiter avec de grands avantages. Cette forêt, une des plus considérables, considérée comme forêt particulière, pourrait fournir deux cents cinquante mille mètres cubes de bois. Elle renferme des arbres de toute dimension. Il y en est qu'on pouvait faire servir pour la marine comme matière de bâtiments. Par sa nature grasse ou résineuse, le bois est employé avec succès pour les chemins de fer, et présente tous les conditions de solidité et de durée. La plus grande partie de la forêt renferme les Pins Larix; il y a aussi une grande quantité de Pins Maritimes. La dimension des arbres maritimes est de 12 à 20 mètres de hauteur; et celle des Pins Larix de 16 à 40 mètres de hauteur, sur une circonférence moyenne de trois mètres."

At the suggestion of one of our foreign ministers, who drew the attention of Government to the possibility of obtaining supplies of timber for naval purposes from the forests of Corsica in private hands, the author, on his return to England, had some communications with official persons respecting the forests of Signor F——; but the matter dropped. Should it be thought a subject worth inquiry, with a view to commercial enterprise, the author will be happy to put any person applying to him, through his Publishers, in the way of procuring further information.

We had already inquired what sport such covers afforded, and the account given of deer and wild boars, not to speak of smaller game, was very tempting. There were bears in the forests in the time of Filippini the historian, but for the last century they have been extinct. There are no wolves; but the foxes are plentiful, and so strong that they venture to attack the flocks of sheep and goats. The Corsican *cerf* is like the red deer. Their colour is ferruginous. In size they are a little larger than fallow deer with a heavier body, and stronger horns, springing upright, spreading less than any other variety, and slightly palmated. Both male and female have a dark line down the back, rump, and scut. The *moufflon* or *muffori* is a most curious animal, almost peculiar, I believe, to this island and Sardinia, though a variety of the species is found in Morocco. Something between a sheep, a deer, and a goat, the male has spiral horns like a goat, rather turned back, with the legs and hind-quarter of a goat, but the head of a sheep. The colour is a reddish brown, with some admixture of black and white, brown predominating. The skin is fine-grained, not woolly but fine-haired, like a deer. It is extremely agile, jumping from rock to rock with surprising leaps, and so wild that, like the chamois and the reindeer, it frequents only the highest mountains, close to the snow-line, in summer, descending, as the snow extends, to lower regions. When the winters are very severe, and the snow covers the ground, it is driven into some of the higher valleys, and has been known to take refuge in the stables among the tame sheep and goats. The *moufflon* goes in troops of from four to twenty. The females drop their young on the edge of the snow in the month of May. There are full-grown specimens of the

moufflon in the Zoological Gardens, Regent's Park, and in the *Jardin de Plantes*, at Paris.

Of smaller game, Corsica abounds in hares and red partridges, the only species found in the island. In winter there are woodcocks, snipes, and water-fowl, and a *grande chasse* of thrushes, which, feeding on the berries of the arbutus, the lentiscus, and the myrtle, become very fat, have a fine flavour, and are esteemed a great delicacy.

But all these varieties of game were forbidden fruit, as a *permis* to carry fire-arms could not be obtained by any class of persons, or for any purpose whatever. The shepherds have only their dogs to protect their flocks. If the prohibition continues long, the wild animals must become the pest of the island, and with their natural increase there will be splendid shooting when the use of fire-arms is again allowed. But for the hope of better sport in Sardinia, we thought of getting up a boar hunt, with spears, in the fashion so picturesquely seen in old pictures, and a much more spirited affair than shooting pigs. For deer and birds there is nothing left but to fall back on bows and arrows, as long as the Corsicans cannot be trusted with fire-arms, lest the *genus homo* should be their prey.

It was the last evening we spent with our "man of the woods." He was very communicative, and, among other things, told us many stories of the heroic deeds of his countrymen in former times, and of the wild life of Corsica, which has only just expired. I preserve one of his tales, relating a recent event, which happily closes the bloody chapter of Corsican banditism.

The Last of the Banditti.

Two brothers, Pierre-Jean and Xavier-Saverio Massoni, men of extraordinary vigour and desperate courage, banded with Arrhigi, another determined outlaw, had for many years been the terror of the wild district of the *Niolo* in which they harboured, and of the neighbouring country. Many were the families they had reduced to misery by cutting off their fathers and brothers; but they had numerous friends, whom they protected. They shared the scanty fare of the shepherds in the mountains, and the people entertained them in their houses; some, *par amitié*, with cordiality and kindness, others from fear. Such was the renown of these banditti chiefs that the authorities used every effort to exterminate them, offering large rewards for their heads, and threatening with severe penalties any who should supply them with the means of existence.

At length a shepherd, who had received some injury from one of the band, betrayed their hiding-place in the fastnesses of the *Niolo* to the *gendarmes*. Led by him through tracks known only to the shepherds and banditti, before daylight on a morning of the month of October, 1851, a body of the *gendarmerie*, twenty or thirty in number, reached the neighbourhood in which the three resolute bandits were concealed. It was a place called Penna-Rosa, near Corscia, a village in the canton of Calacuccia, not very far from Corte.

The bandits are in the habit of separating for their greater security. At this time Pierre Massoni was alone in one of the caves among the rocks; Xavier Massoni and Arrhigi together occupied another. The *gendarmes*, as

active and resolute as the banditti, their mortal foes, with whom they often had desperate encounters, crept towards the cave occupied by Pierre, who, seeing the disparity of numbers, crept into the bush, and attempted to escape, probably intending to join his friends, and with them make a determined resistance. The *gendarmes* fired a volley, and Pierre fell mortally wounded.

Xavier and Arrhigi had, somehow, received intelligence of the approach of the *gendarmes*, and hastening to the spot found them posted in front of the cave. A shot from each of the brigands brought down two of their enemies; and during the confusion caused by this unexpected diversion, the *gendarmes* drawing off, Xavier Massoni, supposing that his brother was concealed in the cave, shouted to him—

"Pierre, come out; I have cleared the way."

This cry drew the attention of the *gendarmes*, and at the same moment he was shot in the thigh by one of the party. A general fire was then opened, but Xavier contrived to creep into the bush, and afterwards made his escape over the mountains, while Arrhigi fled for refuge to a deep and almost inaccessible cavern. The party followed him, and posted themselves, under cover of the rocks, near the mouth of the cave into which they supposed he had retired, for they had not seen him enter; and as the access was so narrow that it could only be attempted by one at a time, the attempt to reconnoitre would have been certain death.

The *gendarmes*, though numbering at least twenty to one, thus held at bay by one man, the bravest of the brave, sent a messenger to Corte to demand a reinforcement. Four hundred troops were detached for this ser-

vice. They were accompanied by the *sous-préfet*, the *procureur imperial*, a captain of engineers, and men with ammunition to blow up the cave. It was a four hours' march from Corte, and they arrived late in the day.

Meanwhile the *gendarmes* beleaguered the spot, keeping under cover. The brave Arrhigi kept close, watchful no doubt. He must have had a stout heart; but we do not paint, we only give the leading details; the reader's imagination will supply the rest.

At length the troops marched up. A French *gendarme*, boldly or incautiously, approached the entrance; he was shot dead on the spot. Then, no doubt was left that Arrhigi was there. Either to spare life, or because no one was found bold enough to lead the forlorn hope in storming the entrance, it was resolved to blow up the cave. The engineers set to work, a shaft was sunk from above, a barrel of gunpowder was lodged in it—the explosion was ineffectual; it left the massive vault and sides of the narrow cavern as firm as ever. It was too deep to be reached without regular mining. Besides, the night was bitter, and the whole party shaking with cold.

Engineering operations were abandoned. As they could neither beard the bandit in his den, nor blow him up, it was determined to starve him out. The troops bivouacked, fires were lighted, and sentinels posted. The siege was converted into a blockade, all in due military order.

"*Centinelle, prend garde à vous!*" was passed from post to post. "*Centinelle, prend garde à moi!*" answered the bold Arrhigi from his rocky hold.

The blockade was maintained for five days and four nights, not without some loss on the part of the besiegers, for Arrhigi opened fire from time to time, as opportunity

offered, and no less than seven of his enemies were struck down by his unerring bullets. Some were wounded.

"Brave soldiers of Napoleon," cried Arrhigi, "carry off your wounded comrades, who want your assistance."

It seems extraordinary that 400 troops should be held at bay by a single man for so long a period; but such was the fact. Perhaps the officials hoped to take him alive, or they might wish to spare a further effusion of blood in actual conflict with the desperate bandit. Arrhigi's cavern had a small store of provisions and some gourds of water. When these were expended, he resolved on making a last effort to force his way through the troops. Could he have stood out a day longer, he might probably have escaped, as the weather became so tempestuous that it would have been impossible for them to maintain their exposed position in those bleak mountains.

On the fourth night, just before the dawn of day, he made the attempt. Dashing from the cavern, and shooting down the nearest sentries right and left with his double-barrelled gun, he gained the thickets. An alarm was raised, and there was a general pursuit. Arrhigi fled towards the Golo, intending, probably, to place that river between him and his pursuers. It was now daylight, and they were upon him before he reached it. Again brought to bay, he took his stand sheltered by a rock. The soldiers cried out to him to surrender; but the resolute bandit, refusing quarter, continued to resist till he was shot through the head.

We left Xavier Massoni escaping into the *maquis*, but slightly wounded in the thigh. The *gendarmes* were so occupied with his brother Pierre and Arrhigi, that he reached, unpursued, a distant forest in the heart of the

mountains. Soon, however, an officer of the *Gendarmerie Corse*, with a detachment of forty or fifty men, was laid on his track. After seven days they discovered the lone cave in which, the last of his band, he had hoped for concealment. It was high up the face of the mountain, but the party scaled it, and summoning Xavier to surrender, he gave his *parole*. Just at that moment a *gendarme* offering a shot, the bandit levelled his gun at him and killed him. He then threw down his arms and came out of the cave, prepared to surrender himself. A sentry posted near, imagining that he intended to escape, shot him dead without challenging him or allowing him time to give himself up. The sentry was punished, as they wished to take the bandit alive, hoping that he would discover those who were in league with him.

Thus fell, with a gallantry worthy of a better cause, these renowned banditti chiefs, who for many years had infested the country, and filled it with alarm and grief. The rest of the band dispersed, were killed, or taken prisoners. Arrhigi's heroic defence closed the series of romantic stories on which the Corsicans delight to dwell. His example might have encouraged the outlaws to emulate his daring resistance; but the unusual force brought against him convinced them that the authorities were no longer to be trifled with. The brigands became thoroughly disheartened, and we hear of no more desperate encounters with the *gendarmerie*. In the course of the following year, the deep solitudes of the Corsican forests and mountains, echoing no longer to the crack of the rifle, were left in the undisturbed possession of the shepherds and their flocks, the foxes and the *moufflons*.

There is another version of the story of the Massoni

and Arrhigi, cleverly wrought up, and giving it, what was scarcely needed, a more romantic character. It differs from that here given in many of the circumstances, and in passing, perhaps, from hand to hand, even the scene has been transferred to the neighbourhood of Monte Rotondo, many miles distant from the spot where the events occurred. My informant was not likely to omit any actual occurrence of a striking nature; and as he lived at Corte, and his occupation often led him to the canton of Callacuccia, he had the best opportunities of learning the facts, if indeed he was not present at the time. His simple narrative is therefore adhered to.

CHAP. XX.

Leave Corte for Ajaccio.—A Legend of Venaco.—Arrival at Vivario.

THE distance from Corte to Ajaccio is about fifty miles; the most interesting objects on the road being the great forest of Vizzavona, and Bocagnono embosomed in chestnut woods. In order to take these leisurely, mules were bespoken at Vivario, a mountain village at the foot of Monte d'Oro, as far as which we determined to avail ourselves of the *diligence* passing through Corte, *en route* from Bastia to Ajaccio. For the first two stages after leaving Corte we knew that there was little temptation to linger on the way; and it is unadvisable to waste time and strength by walking or riding on high-roads when coach or rail will hurry you on to a good starting point for independent rambling. To travel systematically from one great town to another by such conveyances, with perhaps an occasional excursion in the neighbourhood, is a very different affair.

We were called at midnight, and walking to the *bureau*, shortly afterwards the *voiture* came rumbling up, a small primitive vehicle, drawn by three mules. It contained five passengers, "booked through;" three rough fellows, all smoking, and a woman with a squalling *bambino*, dignified by the name of Auguste. Under these circum-

stances, we proposed taking our seat on the roof, as there was no *banquette*. The *commis du bureau* objected;—we should fall off, and he would be blamed; it was *contre les régles;* and every traveller knows how despotically the rules are administered by foreign officials. He must submit to be a mere machine in their hands, to be stowed away and conveyed like his portmanteau. The rules are, however, generally enforced with great civility; but the *commis* was not civil. Early rising, or sitting up late, had put him out of temper, and the passion into which he worked himself about this trifle was very amusing. "There was room inside, and why could not *messieurs* accommodate themselves in the *voiture* like sensible people?"

We did not lose our temper, and carrying our point, had every reason to rejoice in our victory. The moon was up, and showed the sort of scenery through which we passed, by a very hilly but well-engineered road, to great advantage, in its various aspects. Now we were slowly ascending a bare hill-side in the full light; then plunging into hollows buried in the deepest shade of chestnut woods branching over the road. Then there were scattered groups of the rugged ilex, with its pale green leaves silvered by the moonbeams; and, where the land was cultivated, there was the livelier green of the young wheat, and the dark verdure of luxuriant crops of sainfoin: scarcely a house was passed; a solitary habitation is a rare sight in Corsica.

Our position also gave us the advantage of the *voiturier's* conversation, which, under the inspiration of the scene, the woods, and moonlight on a lonely road, was well spiced with stories of banditti. At that corner they stole from

the thicket, and gave their victim a mortal stab. There was a cross over his grave, but it has been removed. A deadly shot from behind that grey rock struck down another. Here they had a bloody fight with the *sbirri.* Such tales, as it has been already remarked, are heard everywhere. I forget the particulars; but they are all variations of one wild strain, of which the key-note is blood.

One legend of another kind I remember. The *voiturier* related it as we approached Venaco: —

"A long while ago — it was in the tenth century, I believe—there lived here a Count of Corsica, by name Arrhigo Colonna, who was so handsome that he was called *Il Bel Messere.* He had a beautiful wife and seven beautiful children. Feuds arose in the country, and his enemies, jealous of his great power, slew the Count and his seven children, and threw their bodies into a little lake among the hills. There was deep lamentation among the vassals of the *Bel Messere;* and his wife, having escaped, led them against the assassins, who had taken refuge in a neighbouring castle, stormed it, and put them all to the sword. Often are the ghosts of the *Bel Messere* and his seven children seen flitting by the pale moonlight—on such a night as this—among the woods and on the green hills of Venaco; and the shepherds on the mountains all around preserve the tradition of their sorrowful fate."

We reached Vivario before daylight, and leaving the *voiture,* scrambled up a lane, then some dark stairs, and found ourselves in the gaunt rooms of a rude *locanda.* The people were astir, expecting us, and the best sight was, not indeed a blazing fire of logs — though Vivario is close to the forest, such fires are not to be seen indoors — but at least some lighted embers on the cooking-hearth,

giving promise of a speedy cup of hot coffee, for we were very cold. The mountain air was keen, Vivario standing nearly 2000 feet above the level of the sea. The best news was that the mules for our journey were forthcoming. Meanwhile, we got our wash, and, it being too early to eat, had our *déjeûner* of bread and wine, grapes and ham, packed in a basket, to be eaten on the road.

We were objects of much curiosity. Whence did we come? where were we going? what was our business? —were questions of course.

"From London."

"*Sono chiesi in Londra?*"

"*Inglesi — sono tutti Christiani?*"

It may easily be imagined that the communal schools in Corsica give little instruction in ethnology; and even intelligent persons, like our former guide Antoine, appeared to doubt our right to be called Christians. That was often questioned, the people seeming little better informed than they were when Boswell travelled in Corsica, almost a century ago.

"*Inglesi,*" said a strong black fellow to him, "*sono barbare; non credono in Dio grande.*"

"Excuse me, sir," replied Boswell; "we do believe in God, and in Jesus Christ too."

"*Um,*" said he, "*e nel Papa?*" (and in the Pope?)

"No."

"*E perche?*" (And why?)

This was a puzzling question under the circumstances, for there was a great audience listening to the controversy. So Boswell thought he would try a method of his own, and he very gravely replied: —

"*Perche siamo troppo lontano.*" (Because we are too far

off.) A very new argument against the universal infallibility of the Pope. It took, however; for his opponent mused awhile, and then said:—

"*Troppo lontano! Ha—Sicilia è tanto lontano che l'Inghilterra; e in Sicilia si credono nel Papa.*" (Too far off! why Sicily is as far off as England; yet in Sicily they believe in the Pope.)

"Ah!" said Boswell, "*Noi siamo dieci volte più lontano che la Sicilia.*" (We are ten times farther off than Sicily.)

"*Aha!*" said the questioner; and seemed quite satisfied. "In this manner," concludes Boswell, "I got off very well. I question much whether any of the learned reasonings of our Protestant divines would have had so good an effect."

Barbari, heretici, whatever we were, we parted on good terms with our kind hostess. Two mules were at the door, attended by a lad, who, at first sight, appeared too young for the long and rather fatiguing journey before us; but he had a most intelligent countenance, with hair, eyes, and features of the true Italian character, and he handled his mules well, and proved a most active and agreeable attendant.

VIVARIO.

CHAP. XXI.

Leave Vivario. — Forest of Vizzavona. — A roadside adventure. — Bocognano. — Arrive late at Ajaccio.

It was broad daylight when we wound up a narrow path to the heights above the village of Vivario, thus saving an angle of the well-engineered high-road by which the *voiture*, preceding us, had gained the summit. Here we seated ourselves on a bank while my friend sketched. His view, reproduced in these pages, happily dispenses with the necessity of any lengthened description. Below, the eye rested on the tall and graceful *campanile* of the village church, with the houses radiating from it, half concealed by the groves of chestnut-trees embowering the valley. The slope beneath our point of view, as well as that on the left under the high-road, was covered by vineyards in terraces and gardens. The contrast of this verdure with the bare ridge beyond the fertile basin, still in deep shade, and the atmospheric effects of a soft and not overpowering light on the foreground, as well as of the vapour rising in the gorge, and hanging in aërial folds about the mountain tops, can only be imagined.

Smoke now began to curl up from the village hearths, and men, in rough jackets of black sheep's wool, with axes slung in their belts, are seen slowly winding up the steep to their work in the forest. The villages on the tops of

the hills under the mountain ranges, of which we counted ten or more, reflect the early sunlight. A small fortified barrack, garrisoned by a party of *gendarmes*, held in check the banditti, whose strongest fastnesses were in this wild neighbourhood, and commands the high-road.

This we now follow; and the views from it are exceedingly picturesque, the engineers having obtained their level for it by pursuing the sinuosities of the defiles round Monte d'Oro, the rival monarch with Monte Rotondo of the Corsican Alps. Its snowy summit is continually in sight on our right, and we observe streaks of new-fallen snow for some distance beneath. On the left, we have the great forest of Vizzavona, which we shortly entered. Having before described a Corsican pine-forest of similar character, repetition would be wearisome. The trees here are of the same species, with some admixture of oak, many of them on a scale of equal or greater magnificence. The finest masts for the French navy have been drawn from this forest.

Heat and hunger now combined to make us look out for a rill of water at a convenient spot for taking our *déjeûner*, and a torrent crossing the road, with a rude bridge over it, we sat down on the low parapet, and, opening our baskets, the boy, Filippi, fetched water from the pure stream to cool and temper our wine. Bread, slices of ham, and grapes, were rapidly disappearing, when unexpected visitors appeared on the scene, in the shape of two country girls, travellers to Ajaccio like ourselves.

We had not been so much struck, to speak the truth, as some travellers seem to have been with the beauty and gracefulness of the Corsican women; but these really were two very pretty girls, of the age of fifteen or sixteen,

brunettes, bright eyed, slightly formed, and with pleasing and expressive features. They were lightly clad, and one of them carried a small bundle. Accosted by Filippi, we learnt that they came from Corte, and were on their way to Ajaccio, in search of domestic service. Filippi appeared to know some of their family. To desire the boy to share with them the meal he was making at some little distance was only returning Corsican hospitality. The girls were shy at first, and it was only by degrees that we were able to establish a chat with them; and I was struck with the manner in which the eldest, taking a handful of new chestnuts from a bag, offered the contribution to our picnic. Poor girls! chestnuts and the running brooks were probably all they had to depend upon for refreshment during their journey. Happily, both were easily to be found.

Our road lying the same way, and the girls having walked from Vivario, while we had been riding, they were offered a ride on the mules, and, after some hesitation, the offer was accepted. With Filippi for their squire, the trio being about the same age, they were a merry party, making the glades of the old forest ring with their laughter and the sound of their young voices in the sweetest of tongues. The girls were in such glee, Filippi pressing the mules to a gallop, that though we enjoyed the fun, we really feared they would be thrown off. Our fears were groundless; riding astride, as is the fashion of the country — but with all propriety — they had a firm seat, and laughed at our apprehensions.

With all this exuberance of spirits, there were the greatest modesty and simplicity in the demeanour of these poor girls. When they proceeded in a more sober

mood, we joined in the conversation, asking questions about their prospects at Ajaccio, and the schooling they had received. They had no friends at Ajaccio; but the "Mother of Mercy" would guide and protect them!

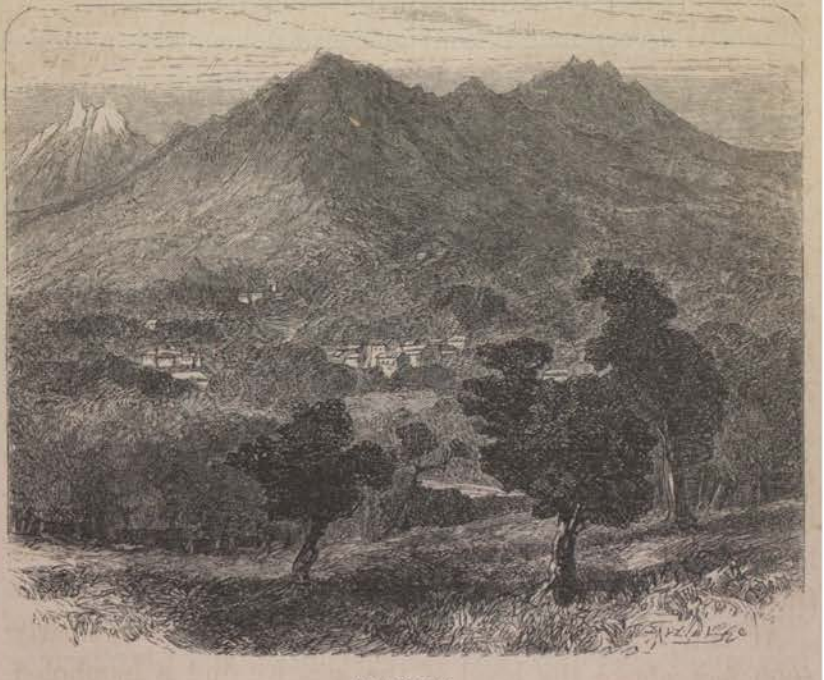
The number of the girls receiving education at the communal and conventual schools in Corsica is very disproportionate to that of the boys. Marmocchi states the number of the former, in 1851 or 1852, as 2362, while the males receiving public instruction were 14,196. Of the girls, only 546 are educated in the communal schools, and 1816 in the establishments of the *Sœurs de St. Joseph* or the *Filles de Marie*. The proportion of boys frequenting the Corsican schools, relatively with those of France, is 137 to 100 in the winter, and 226 to 100 in the summer; but that of the girls is in the inverse, the relative number being much smaller in Corsica — 12 only to 100 in the winter, and 21 to 100 in the summer.

Our fellow-travellers were among the favoured number. Bridget, the eldest, opened her bundle, and took from among the folds of their slender stock of clothes two little books, which she showed us with modest pride. They contained catechisms, the *Pater-noster*, the *Ave Maria*, and a short litany to the Blessed Virgin. Poor girls! their trust was in Heaven! They had little else to trust in; but there was a "Mother of Mercy" to befriend her loving children. That was the most comfortable article in their creed — ideal, but very beautiful.

At the highest point of the *Col* of Vizzavona, nearly 4000 feet above the level of the sea, we find a loopholed barrack, surrounded by a ditch, where a small force of the *gendarmerie* is stationed to operate against the brigands. Standing among bare rocks, with the precipices of Monte

d'Oro frowning above it, the position is most dismal. Fancy that bleak barrack in the long, dreary winter of such an elevation, when ice and snow reign over the whole *plateau!* And what must have been the severity of the service when the bleak forest was the hiding-place, and Bocagnono, just under, the head-quarters, of the most desperate banditti!

We still walked on, really preferring it, and glad not only to give the girls a lift, but to spare the mules, while carrying their light weight, for the hard service yet before them. After passing the *col*, we had a splendid view of Bocagnono and its hamlets, buried in trees, with bold



BOCAGNONO.

mountains beyond. The pines now gave way to beech woods, and soon afterwards we reached the level of the

chestnut. The fall of the ground became rapid, but, as usual in such cases, the face of the hill being traversed by stages of inclined planes, blasted by gunpowder in the rocks, the gradients of the road were easy.

The chestnut trees in the valley are of extraordinary size, and a rich *contour* of growth. Scattered capriciously among the groves are no less than ten hamlets, all attached to Bocagnono. It is a wild and romantic neighbourhood; and the principal village, though surrounded with verdure, has a most desolate aspect, the houses being built of unhewn stone, black with age, and the windows unglazed.

Walking down the long, straggling street, noting appearances, a little in advance of our singular cavalcade, we observed a very magnificent officer of police, with a cocked hat and feathers, and sword by his side, sitting on a bench, smoking his pipe. He scrutinised us closely as we passed, munching chestnuts, and carelessly throwing the shells not very far from his worshipful presence. Filippi soon following with the mules, he was stopped by this important personage, who questioned him sharply about us. Appearances were rather against us. The spruce *gendarme* might possibly not understand — and it is often a puzzle — how gentlemen in light coats and stout shoes, bronzed, dusty, and travel-stained, could be walking through the country quite at their ease. Foreigners make themselves up for travelling in a very different style. Our juvenile *suite* also was somewhat singular, and, altogether, as I have said, circumstances were suspicious. We might be the last of the bandits, making their escape to the coast in disguise, with part of their little family. The orders to arrest such characters were very strict.

However, it is to be presumed that the official was

satisfied with Filippi's report, and we escaped a detention which might have caused us loss of time and patience. Having cleared the town, we took counsel together. The day was wearing away, and we were still some thirty miles from Ajaccio. It was Saturday, and we wished to get to the end of our journey in order to enjoy a quiet Sunday. There was nothing on the road to tempt us to linger, and no probability of finding decent accommodations; while at Ajaccio, we should be in clover, and get a fresh outfit, our baggage having been forwarded there. On the other hand, it was a long pull, and Filippi remonstrated on behalf of the mules and himself. The first objection was overruled, and the other removed by our engaging to take the boy *en croupe* by turns. Our female attendants we dismissed with the means of procuring lodgings for the night; and we relieved Bridget of her burthen, desiring her to call for it at the hotel at Ajaccio.

Bocagnono stands in the gorge of a long valley, watered by the Gravone. This river falls into the sea a little south of Ajaccio, and the road, for the most part following its course, is generally easy. After leaving Bocagnono, the valley opened. We were among green hills, with the river flowing through a rich plain; the Alpine range, from which we had just descended, making a fine background to this pleasant landscape. Further on, some very picturesque villages, perched as usual on heights, increased its interest.

We kept the mules to as sharp a trot as was consistent with the work still before us. Unfortunately, in the jolting, poor Bridget's bundle got loose, and the contents being scattered on the road, the wardrobe of a Corsican girl was exposed to profane eyes, and it became incumbent on me,

in discharge of my trust, to restore it to order with all possible neatness and security. Again we pricked on, and crossing the Gravone at the Ponte d'Usciano, the road began to ascend, carrying us for some miles over a rugged spur of the mountains. Here we found ourselves again among the shrubbery which forms so characteristic a feature in the landscape of these islands. Having passed the ruins of a house, the inmates of which, even to the infant in the cradle, had been butchered in one of the feuds so common in Corsica, we halted at a roadside *alberge*, near a *baraque* of the *gendarmerie*. Bread and grapes, with new wine, were spread for us under the shade of a tree, and we refreshed ourselves while our mules got their feed of barley.

We had now nearly a level road all the way to Ajaccio. The plain was well cultivated, and we remarked some irrigated fields of maize. Soon afterwards it became dark, and the mules being much distressed, we could only proceed at a slow pace. The fatigue of riding was much lessened by having an English saddle; still it was a hard day's travelling: but the air was deliciously balmy, and the glow-worm's lamp and cricket's chirp helped to cheer the weariness of a road which seemed interminable. Presently, we met country people returning from the market at Ajaccio, lights were seen more frequently on the hills, and, at last, the lantern on the pier-head — a welcome beacon — came in view. Half an hour afterwards, we dismounted at an hotel on the Corso.

CHAP. XXII.

Ajaccio. — Collège-Fesch. — Reminiscences of the Bonaparte Family. — Excursion in the Gulf. — Chapel of the Greeks. — Evening Scenes. — Council-General of the Department. — Statistics. — State of Agriculture in Corsica. — Her Prospects.

SUNDAY morning we attended high-mass at the cathedral of Ajaccio, a building of the sixteenth century, in the Italian style, having a belfry and dome, with the interior richly decorated. The service was well performed, there being a fine-toned organ, and the music of the mass well selected. The congregation was numerous, the girls' school especially. I was struck with the pensive cast of features in many of the girls, so like the Madonnas of the Italian masters. There were formerly six dioceses in Corsica, Mariana being the principal; for many years they have been all administered by the Bishop of Ajaccio, who is at present a suffragan of the Archbishop of Aix, in France.

After service, we called on one of the professors of the *Collège-Fesch*, to whom we had letters of introduction. This college and the *Séminaire* are the best buildings in Ajaccio, both being finely situated fronting the sea. The *Séminaire* is confined exclusively to the education of theological students intended for the clerical orders. In the other, founded and endowed by Cardinal Fesch, the course

of study is that generally pursued in the French colleges. The cardinal appears to have had more affection for his native place than any other member of the Bonaparte family, giving a proof of it in this noble foundation. He also bequeathed to his native place a large collection of pictures, few of them, however, of much merit. His remains are deposited with those of Madame Letizia, his sister, in a chapel of the cathedral of Ajaccio, having been brought from Rome; where I recollect seeing him in 1819,—short and portly in person, with a mild and good-humoured expression of countenance. He had been a kind guardian of the young Bonapartes, and carefully administered the small property they inherited.

The *Collège-Fesch* is a large building, with spacious lecture-rooms, long and lofty corridors, and a yard for exercise; the windows of the front looking out on the Gulf of Ajaccio and the mountains beyond. The professor's apartments had all the air of the rooms of a college fellow and tutor in one of our universities, carpets *et aliis mutandis;* only they were more airy and spacious. There are fifteen professors, of whom the Abbate Porazzi is one of the most distinguished. We were indebted to him for many good offices during our stay at Ajaccio. The number of students at this time was 260. They appeared to be of all ranks and ages; some of them grown men.

Everything here has the southern character. We find rows of lemon-trees on the Corso; and the cactus, or Indian fig, flourishes in the environs,—the bright oleander thriving in the open air. The heat was excessive, my thermometer standing at 80° at noon, in the shade of an airy room. From the Corso, a short street leads into the market-place, a square, bounded on one side by the port,

and embellished by a fountain. During the last year it has been further ornamented by a statue of the first Napoleon, of white marble, standing on a granite pedestal, and facing the harbour. Concealed during the reigns of the restored Bourbons, its erection was a homage to the rising fortunes of the President of the French Republic. Ajaccio, being the modern capital of Corsica, the *chef-lieu* of the department, and seat of the *préfetture* and administration, is more French in habits and feeling than any other town in the island. But even here, I apprehend, there has never been much enthusiasm for the Bonapartes.* Among the native Corsicans, Pascal Paoli is the national hero.

We visited, of course, the house in which the first Napoleon was born, standing in a little solitary court dignified

* There was no appeal to any personal attachment of the Corsicans to the Bonaparte family, as sprung from among themselves, or to their gratitude for benefits conferred on them, in the address with which, in 1851, the *Préfet* urged the Council-General to take part in the general movement in France for the abrogation of the article in the Constitution which precluded the advance of Louis Napoleon to supreme power. "*Marchons,*" he said, "*avec la grande majorité de la France vers ce grand jour qui doit rendre le calme aux esprits, la confiance aux intérêts, et la liberté d'action à l'autorité!*"

The resolution, passed by a large majority after a warm debate, was thus prefaced:—"*Considérant qu'il importe de donner à la France des institutions que ses besoins reclament, et que ses intérêts moraux et matériels exigent: Considérant que le commerce et l'industrie, ces sources indispensables de l'existence de toute société ne se relèveront de leur affaissement, et ne reprenderont un nouvel essor, qu'autant que la constitution leur promettra un avenir plus assuré: Considérant, en outre, que la souveraineté nationale trouve dans l'article* 45 *de la Constitution un obstacle légal à la libre manifestation de sa volonté et de sa reconnaissance envers le Président actuel de la République, qui a rendu l'ordre et la sécurité au pays par la sagesse et la fermeté de son gouvernement: renouvelle, à la majorité de quarante-deux voix contre quatre, le vœu que la Constitution de* 1848 *soit revisée, et l'article* 45 *abrogée.*"

with the name of the *Piazza Lucrezia*, near the market-place. It has been often described. Uninhabited, and without a vestige of furniture, except some faded tapestry on the walls, the desolate and gloomy air of the birth-place of the great emperor struck me even more than the deserted apartments at Longwood, from which his spirit took its flight. There, sheaves of corn and implements of husbandry still gave signs of human life, singularly as they contrasted with the relics of imperial grandeur recently witnessed by the homely apartments. A man, born in the first year of the French Revolution, and who has followed the career of its "child and champion" with the feelings common to most Englishmen, can have no Napoleonic sympathies; yet, without forgetting the atrocities, the selfishness, and the littleness which stained and disfigured that career, it is impossible that such scenes could be contemplated by a thoughtful mind, not only without profound reflection on the vicissitudes of life, but without a full impression of the genius and force of character which lifted the Corsican adventurer to the dangerous height from whence he fell.

One afternoon we hired a boat in the harbour, and sailed down the Gulf of Ajaccio. This fine inlet, opening to the south-west, is from three to four leagues in length and breadth, and forms a basin of about twelve leagues in circumference, from the northern extremity, where the old city stood, to its outlet between the *Isles Sanguinaires* and the Capo di Moro, on the opposite coast. A range of mountains, considerably inferior in elevation to the central chain from which they ramify, rises almost from the shore, and stretches along the northern side of the gulf. The other coast is more indented, and swells into the ridges of

the Bastelica, embracing the rich valley of Campo Loro (*Campo del' Oro*), washed by the Gravone. The Gulf of Ajaccio, like many others, has been compared to the Bay of Naples; but, I think, without much reason, except for the colouring lent by a brilliant and transparent atmosphere to both sea and land. In the case of Ajaccio, the effects are heightened by a still more southern climate, and the grander scale of the mountain scenery.

There were only a few small vessels, employed in the coasting trade, in the port. We rowed round the mole,

HARBOUR OF AJACCIO.

under the frowning bastions of the citadel, a regular work covering a point stretching into the bay; and then hoisting sail, stood out into the gulf. The wind was too light to admit of our gaining its entrance; we sailed down it, however, for four or five miles in the mid-channel, the rocky islands at the northern entrance gradually opening; one crowned with the tower of a lighthouse, another with

a village on its summit. The coast to our right was clothed with the deep verdure of the ever memorable Corsican shrubbery, breathing aromatic odours as we drifted along: otherwise, it appeared desolate; not a village appeared, and the barren and rugged mountain chain towered above.

Finding that we made but little progress, the boat was steered for a little reef of rocks on the northern shore, and landing, we dismissed the boatman, determining to walk back to Ajaccio along the water's edge. Meanwhile we sat down on the rocks while my companion sketched. Presently I strolled up to a little chapel, standing by the side of the road which winds round the gulf towards *les Isles Sanguinaires*. A simple and chaste style of Italian architecture distinguished the white *façade*, rising gracefully to a pediment, crowned with a cross; pilasters, supporting arches, divided the portico beneath into three compartments, the central one forming the entrance. The door was closed, but the interior was visible through a *grille* at the side. The nave was paved with blue and white squares, and marble steps led up to the sanctuary, forming, with two side chapels, a Greek cross. There was no ornament, no furniture, except two or three low chairs for kneeling. Under the portico was a marble tablet, inscribed in good Latin, to the pious memory of a Pozzo di Borgo*, who restored the chapel in 1632. I read on another tablet:—

"*Per gli Orfanelli dei Marinari Naufragati.*"

Under an arch supported by pillars of green marble, a

* This family is one of the most ancient in Corsica. Count Pozzo di Borgo, the celebrated diplomatist, was born at Alata, a village near Ajaccio. He commenced his public career under the administration of Pascal Paoli, signed the Anglo-Corsican Constitutional Act as Secretary of State (see before, p. 173.), and was afterwards President of the Corsican Parliament. His subsequent career is matter of history.

lamp was feebly glimmering, fed perhaps by the offerings of loving mothers and fond wives who here offered their vows for the safe return of those dear to them.

The sun was setting behind the islands at the mouth of the gulf, perfect stillness reigned, broken only by a gentle ripple on the granite rocks forming ledges from the water's edge to the base of the chapel. Struck with its singular interest, and wishing to learn more about it, on returning to my friend, who was still sketching, I found him in conversation with some loungers from the town. They could only tell us that it was called "The Chapel of the Greeks," and, laughing, turned on their heels when I pursued my inquiries. Did they suppose that we Northerns had no sentiment in our religion, or had they none themselves? I afterwards heard two traditions respecting the Chapel of the Greeks. One, that it was founded by the remains of a colony from the Morea, who, having been expelled with great loss from their settlement at Cargese, were granted an asylum here; — the other, that the original building was erected, by Greek mariners, in acknowledgment of their escape from shipwreck on this coast.

It would be difficult, I imagine, to find a more favourable point of view, or a happier moment, than that of which my friend availed himself to make the sketch of Ajaccio, which has been selected for the frontispiece of this volume. The gulf was perfectly calm, and of the deepest green and azure, a slight ripple being only discernible where a boat lay in one of the long streams of light reflected from the mass of orange and golden clouds in which the sun was setting behind the islands; while, to the east, flakes of rosy hue floated in the mid-heaven. The sails of the feluccas, becalmed in the gulf, faintly caught the light, and it

gleamed on the houses of Ajaccio, particularly those of the modern town, distinguished by its white walls and red roofs from the old buildings about the cathedral. Behind were sugar-loaf hills; and the mountain-sides across the gulf glowed with the richest purple. Then came gradual changes of colour, softer and deeper hues, till, at last, a steamy veil of mist from seaward stole over the gulf. A faint glimmer from the lighthouse at the entrance of the harbour was scarcely visible in the blaze left behind by the glorious sunset.

The lights began to twinkle from the windows of Ajaccio, and the cathedral bells tolling for the Ave Maria, stole on the ear across the gulf in the silence of the twilight hour. Reluctant to leave the scene, we lingered till it was shrouded from view, and an evening never to be forgotten closed in. Then we wound slowly towards the city along the shore, at the foot of hills laid out in vineyards hedged by the prickly cactus, or lightly sprinkled with myrtles and cystus, and all those odoriferous plants which now perfumed the balmy night air. Embowered in these, we had remarked some mortuary chapels, the burying-places of Ajaccian families. One of them, high up on the hill-side, was in the form of a Grecian temple; and we now passed another, standing among cypresses, close to the shore. Nearer the city, two stone pillars stand at the entrance of an avenue leading up to a dilapidated country-house, formerly the residence of Cardinal Fesch, and where Madame Bonaparte and her family generally spent the summer. Among the neglected shrubberies, and surrounded by the wild olive, the cactus, the clematis, and the almond, is a singular and isolated granite rock, called Napoleon's grotto, once his favourite retreat.

On our return, we found the streets thronged; braziers with roasted chestnuts stood at every corner; strings of mules, loaded with wine casks suspended on each side, were returning from the vineyards; and there was a gay promenade on the Corso — ladies with no covering for their heads but the graceful black *faldetta*, French officers in not very brilliant uniforms, and a sprinkling of ecclesiastics in *soutanes* and prodigious beavers.

Professor Porazzi took us to the only bookseller's shop in Ajaccio, where we made some purchases. It was a small affair, the book trade being combined with the sale of a variety of miscellaneous articles. The *préfetture*, a handsome building, lately finished, contains a library of 25,000 volumes. We were introduced there to M. Camille Friess, the author of a compendious history of Corsica, who was kind enough to show us some of the archives, of which he has the custody. Among the documents connected with the Bonaparte family is a memorial, addressed by Napoleon to the Intendant of Corsica, respecting his mother's right to a garden. I jotted down the beginning and end: —

"*Memoire relative à la pépinière d'Ajaccio.*

"*Letizia Ramolini, veuve de Buonaparte, d'Ajaccio, a l'honneur de vous exposer . . . .*

"*Votre très humble*
et très obeissant serviteur,
"BUONAPARTE *, *Officier d'Artillerie.*

"*Hotel de Cherbourg,*
"*Rue St. Honoré, Paris, le* 9 *Nov.* 1787."

The claim for a few roods of nursery garden was made

* I find the name spelt indiscriminately Bonaparte and Buonaparte.

by a young man who afterwards distributed kingdoms and principalities! It is said that in the division of some property which fell to the family after he became emperor, his share was an olive-yard in the environs of Ajaccio.

M. Friess obligingly gave me copies of the *procès-verbals* of the proceedings of the Council-General of the Department for the preceding years. These reports are printed annually, and, I believe, similar ones are made in all the departments of France. Those I possess are models of good arrangement in whatever concerns provincial administration. They have supplied more information on the present state of Corsica and its prospects of improvement than all the books of travel, and works of greater pretensions, it has been my fortune to meet with.

The Council-General, as many of my readers know, is a body elected by the people; each canton, of which there are sixty-one in Corsica, sending representatives in proportion to the population. The *préfet*, who is *ex-officio* president, opens the session by a speech, in which he reviews the affairs of the department under the heads of finance, public works, education, &c., &c., and presents a budget, with detailed reports on the various branches of administration. All these are printed, with a short *procès-verbal* of the debates, and the divisions when the Council-General comes to a vote. The proceedings are submitted to the Minister of the Interior, who approves or rejects the proposals made. Virtually, however, although the Council has no power to act on its resolutions until they are confirmed by the cen-

Napoleon, when young, wrote it both ways. It is spelt Bonaparte in the entry of his baptism in the Register of Ajaccio, which was solemnised (by-the-bye) two years after his birth, the dates being 15 Aug. 1769; 21 July, 1771. His father signed the entry as "Carlo Buonaparte."

tral government, whatever relates to the assessment of taxes, police, roads, and other works, all matters of local interest not only come under discussion in these provincial assemblies, but are shaped and decided by them. The services thus rendered must therefore be very valuable, and it is worth considering whether our over-worked House of Commons might not be relieved of some of its burthens, and the business better done, by similar representative bodies, entrusted with legislative powers so far as concerns matters of local interest. Such assemblies would well accord with our Anglo-Saxon institutions. But to give them a fair field, with sufficient weight, impartiality, and importance, a considerable area should be embraced in each jurisdiction. Durham might be united with Yorkshire; the three western counties, Somerset, Devon, and Cornwall, might form a province; North and South Wales, each one. And what a valuable body of statistics would be furnished by an annual report, corresponding with those which have led to these remarks!

We gather some general statistics from these documents and other sources.

By the census of 1851, the population of Corsica was 236,251 souls, of whom 117,938 were males, and 118,313 females. All but 54 were Roman Catholics. There were no less than 32,364 proprietors of land. The day-labourers were 34,427; government officials, 1229; clergy, 955; regular troops, *gendarmes*, &c., 5000. The number of students in all the public colleges and schools was from 16,000 to 17,000, of which 15,000 were male, and only from 2000 to 3000 females. The proportion of males frequenting the schools is greater than in France, it being as 137 to 100 in the winter, and 226 to 100 in the summer; while that of

the girls is the reverse, being as 12 to 100 in the winter, and 21 to 100 in the summer. This disproportion between male and female scholars in Corsica is very remarkable.

The superficies of the island is estimated at somewhat less than two millions and a quarter of English acres. Of this surface, only a six-hundredth part is, on an average, under cultivation, an area which, it is said, might be doubled. Vast portions of the soil belong to the communes, and measures are in contemplation for their improvement.

Wheat produces, on an average of years, an increase of nine times the seed sown; barley and oats, twelve or thirteen; maize, thirty-eight to forty; and potatoes, twenty.

The rate of daily wages for the year 1851 was fixed by the Council-General at 75 *centimes* for the towns of Ajaccio and Bastia, and 50 *centimes* for all the other communes.

Among the most important subjects brought to notice by the *procès-verbal* of 1851 is the state of agriculture in the island; on which the *Préfet* finds little to congratulate the Council-General except an increase in the cultivation of lucerne and in the plantations of mulberry-trees. The obstacles to its progress are found in the insecurity of life, the want of inclosures, and the unbounded rights of common enjoyed by the shepherds; in the richest plains being uninhabited, and their distance from the villages; in the pestilential air of these plains, and the want of roads.—A stranger will be disposed to add to this list the indolence of the natives. So far as the obstacles to improvement can be surmounted by judicious legislation and encouragement, the *procès-verbals* of the Council-General exhibit enlightened ideas far in advance of the opinions and habits

of the people; and there is much good sense and right feeling in the observation with which the *Préfet*, in one of his addresses, concludes his statement of the position of affairs: —

"Si la Corse," he says, "devait passer subitement à l'état des civilisations avancées, elle courait risque de perdre dans cette transformation (et ce serait à jamais deplorable) tout ce qu'il y a de primitif, de généreux, d'énergetique dans ses mœurs séculaires. Je n'en citerai qu'un exemple. Le mouvement civilisateur trouve, à certains égards, résistance dans la force des sentiments de famille, dans la cohésion des membres qui la composent. Et, cependant, qui d'entre vous consentirait à acheter les progrès de la civilisation au prix du rélâchement de ces liens sacrés qui sont la clef de voûte de toute société organisée?"

Delivered from the scourge of *banditisme* and the *vendetta* by severe measures, supposed to be strongly opposed to the popular instinct, and with hopes held out of such further improvement in civilisation as the progress of ideas will admit, Corsica may, perhaps, have no reason to regret that she failed in her long struggles for national independence. But France will not have performed her duty to this outlying department of the empire till she promotes the manufactures and commerce of the island. It is a part of the protective system to which she clings to discourage all direct foreign trade, just as England formerly engrossed the commerce of her colonies. The result is that the poor Corsicans, compelled to purchase the commodities they require — manufactured goods, colonial produce, and even corn and cattle — in the French market, buy at enormously high prices. The balance of trade is much against

them, their annual exports to France being only a million and a half of *francs*, while they import from thence articles of the value of three millions. The present Emperor of France is understood to entertain enlightened views on the subject of free trade; and it is to be hoped that, when he is able to carry them out, Corsica will share in the benefits of an unrestricted commerce.

CHAP. XXIII.

Leave Ajaccio. — Neighbourhood of Olmeto. — Sollacaró. — James Boswell's Residence there. — Scene in the "Corsican Brothers" laid there. — Quarrel of the Vincenti and Grimaldi.—Road to Sartene. — Corsican Marbles. — Arrive at Bonifacio.

We were quite as well served, and the accommodations were as good, at Ajaccio as in any provincial city of France. They gave us a delicate white wine made in the neighbourhood, an agreeable beverage, which, we thought, resembled *Chablais;* and a *confiture* of cherries preserved in jelly, which was exquisite. I had told the story of our adventure with the poor girls from Corte to the mistress of the house, and, on Bridget's appearing the day after our arrival to claim her wardrobe, she informed me, with great joy, that our good hostess had taken her into her service.

On leaving Ajaccio, Sartene was our next point. The road crosses the Gravone and the Prunelle, flowing into the gulf through fertile valleys, and then winds through a wild and mountainous country, in which Cauro is the only village, till, surmounting the Col San Georgio, 2000 feet above the level of the sea, it descends into a rich plain, watered by the Taravo. In its upper course its branches water two romantic valleys, which formed the ancient fiefs of Ornano and Istria, the seats of powerful lords in the old times. Picturesque scenery, ruins of castles, and mediæval

tales lend a charm to this region, in which we would gladly have wandered for some days, but that Sardinia was before us.

There are few finer spots in the island than the *paese* of Olmeto, the principal village being surrounded by mountains, with a plain below, extending to the deep inlet of the Mediterranean, called the Gulf of Valinco, and rich in corn-lands, olive, and fruit trees. At Olmeto we were served with a dish of magnificent apples, some of them said to weigh two pounds. On the Monte Buturetto, 3000 feet high, are seen the ruins of the stronghold of Arrigo della Rocca; and, further on, near Sollacaró, another almost inaccessible summit was crowned by a castle, built by his nephew, Vincentello d'Istria — both famed in Corsican story.

It was at Sollacaró, standing at the foot of this hill, that our countryman, Boswell, first presented himself to Pascal Paoli, in a house of the Colonna's, with letters of introduction from the Count de Rivarola and Rousseau. Boswell remained some time with Paoli, who was then keeping a sort of court at Sollacaró, and admitted him to the most familiar intercourse. His conversations with the illustrious Corsican, jotted down in his own peculiar style, form the most interesting part of the account of his tour, published after his return to England. "From my first setting out on this tour," he states, "I wrote down every night what I had observed during the day. Of these particulars the most valuable to my readers, as well as to myself, must surely be the memoirs and remarkable sayings of Pascal Paoli, which I am proud to record."*

* *An Account of Corsica and Journal of a Tour*, by James Boswell, p. 297.

Boswell was treated with much distinction, and appears to have been flattered with the character, which ignorance or policy attributed to him, of being *Il Ambasciadore Inglese*. "In the morning," he says, "I had my chocolate served up on a silver salver, adorned with the arms of Corsica. I dined and supped constantly with the general. I was visited by all the nobility; and when I chose to make a little tour, I was attended by a party of guards. One day, when I rode out, I was mounted on Paoli's own horse, with rich furniture of crimson velvet and broad gold lace, and had my guards marching along with me." His vanity so flattered, and with what he calls Attic evenings, "*noctes, cœnæque Deûm*," giving scope to his ruling passion, James Boswell must have been in the seventh heaven while Paoli's guest at Sollacaró.

But the most amusing part of the affair is the efforts he made to ingratiate himself with the lower classes of the Corsicans, his admiration of whom is sometimes chequered by a wholesome fear of their wild instincts. "I got a Corsican dress made," he says, "in which I walked about with an air of true satisfaction. The general did me the honour to present me with his own pistols, made in the island, all of Corsican wood and iron, and of excellent workmanship. I had every other accoutrement.* The peasants and soldiers became quite free and easy with me. One day, they would needs hear me play upon my German flute. I gave them one or two Italian airs, and then some of our beautiful old Scotch tunes — 'Gilderoy,' 'The Lass of Patie's Mill,' 'Corn-riggs are bonny.' The pathetic simplicity and pastoral gaiety of the Scotch music will

* Boswell figured in this costume at the Jubilee Shakespeare Festival held at Stratford-on-Avon under Garrick's auspices.

always please those who have the genuine feelings of nature. The Corsicans were charmed with the specimens I gave them.

"My good friends insisted also on having an English song from me. I endeavoured to please them in this, too, and was very lucky in what occurred to me. I sung to them 'Hearts of oak are our ships; hearts of oak are our men.' I translated it into Italian for them; and never did I see men so delighted with a song as the Corsicans were with 'Hearts of Oak.' '*Cuore di querco*,' cried they, '*bravo Inglese!*' It was quite a joyous riot."

Boswell's correspondence during this tour is also characteristic. He informs us that he walked one day to Corte, from the convent where he lodged, purposely to write a letter to Mr. Samuel Johnson.—"I told my revered friend, that from a kind of superstition, agreeable in a certain degree to him as well as to myself, I had, during my travels, written to him from LOCA SOLEMNIA, places in some measure sacred. That, as I had written to him from the tomb of Melancthon, sacred to learning and piety, I now wrote to him from the palace of Pascal Paoli, sacred to wisdom and liberty; knowing that, however his political principles may have been represented, he had always a generous zeal for the common rights of humanity.

"Mr. Johnson was pleased with what I wrote here; for I received, at Paris, an answer from him, which I keep as a valuable charter. 'When you return, you will return to an unaltered and, I hope, unalterable friend. All that you have to fear from me is the vexation of disappointing me. No man loves to frustrate expectations which have been formed in his favour, and the pleasure which I promise myself from your journals and remarks is so great, that

perhaps no degree of attention or discernment will be able to afford it. Come home, however, and take your chance. I long to see you and to hear you; and hope that we shall not be so long separated again. Come home, and expect such a welcome as is due to him whom a wise and noble curiosity has led where, perhaps, no native of this country ever was before.' "*

We have a certain sympathy for Boswell. He was the first Englishman on record who penetrated into Corsica, and none but ourselves, as far as we have any account, have followed his steps for nearly a century. Not to weary the reader, we have done him injustice in only making extracts from his work betraying the weak points of his character; for his account of Corsica is valuable for its research, its descriptions, and its history of the times. His *memorabilia* of Pascal Paoli supply ample materials for any modern Plutarch who would contrast his character with that of his rival countryman, Napoleon Bonaparte. Commencing their political career in unison, widely as it diverged, both ended their lives in exile on British soil. Though Paoli's sphere was narrow, so was that of some of the greatest men in Grecian history; and, like theirs, it had far extended relations. The eyes of Europe were upon him; Corsica was then its battle-field, and the principles of his conduct and administration are of universal application.

But Sollacaró may have more interest for the public of the present day from its connection with a romance of Alexandre Dumas, and the play founded upon it, than from Paoli's having held court, or Boswell's visit to him,

* *An Account of Corsica and Journal of a Tour*, by James Boswell, p. 362.

there. We have traced the wizard's footsteps, in one of his works of genius, at the Château d'If and Monte Cristo*, we meet them again in the wilds of Corsica. Few of my readers can follow us there; but let them go to the "Princess's" when "The Corsican Brothers" is performed, and they will realise much that we have told them of the Corsican temperament and Corsican life. How true to nature is the reply of Fabian, in the first act, to the suggestion of his friend, "Then you will never leave the village of Sollacaró?" — "It seems strange to you that a man should cling to such a miserable country as Corsica; but what else can you expect? I am one of those plants that will only live in the open air. I must breathe an atmosphere impregnated with the life-giving emanations of the mountains and the sharp breezes of the sea. I must have my torrents to cross, my rocks to climb, my forests to explore. I must have my carbine, room, independence, and liberty. If I were transported into a city, methinks I should be stifled, as if I were in a prison."

The scene of the first act is laid in an old mansion of the Colonna's at Sollacaró, perhaps that in which Boswell lodged. The action turns upon an antient feud between the Orlandi and Colonne, which is with difficulty extinguished by the intervention of Fabian, one of the Corsican brothers. A short dialogue tells the story:—

"FABIAN. 'You come among us to witness a *vendetta;* well! you will behold something much more rare — you will be present at a reconciliation.'

"ALFRED. 'A reconciliation?'

"FAB. 'Which will be no easy matter, I assure you, considering the point to which things are come.'

* See before, p. 15. and 46.

"ALF. 'And from what did this great quarrel originate, which, thanks to you, is on the eve of being extinguished?'

"FAB. 'Why, I confess I feel some difficulty in telling you that. The first cause was —'

"ALF. 'Was what?'

"FAB. 'The first cause was a hen.'

"ALF. (*astonished*) 'A hen!'

"FAB. 'Yes. About ten years ago, a hen escaped from the poultry-yard of the Orlandi, and took refuge in that of one of the Colonne. The Orlandi claimed the hen. The Colonne maintained it was theirs. In the heat of the discussion, an Orlando was imprudent enough to threaten that he would summon the Colonne before the *Juge de Paix*, and put them on their oath. At this menace, an old woman of the Colonna family, who held the hen in her hand, twisted its neck, and threw it in the face of the mother of Orlando. "There," said she, "if the hen be thine, eat it!" Upon this, an Orlando picked up the hen by the claws, and raised his hand, with the hen in it, to strike her who had thrown it in the face of his mother; but at the moment he lifted his hand, a Colonna, who unfortunately had his loaded carbine with him, without hesitation, fired, and shot him in the breast, and killed him.'

"ALF. 'Good heavens! And how many lives has this ridiculous squabble cost?'*

* Ridiculously trifling as the origin of this bloody quarrel may appear, the story is very probably founded on fact. Renucci relates another scarcely less absurd. Feuds, similar to those mentioned in the play, had long existed between the Vincenti and Grimaldi families, inhabitants of the village of Monte d'Olmo, in the *pieve* of Ampugnano. Like good Catholics, however, they met sometimes at mass. The church was sacred and neutral ground; there, at least, the *trêve de Dieu* might be supposed to be in force. Thither, on some solemn feast, the villagers, indiscriminately, bent their steps. Some had already entered the church, and were

"FAB. 'There have been nine persons killed and five wounded.'

engaged in their devotions, many loitered about the door, and the *piazza* was crowded. Talking about one thing and another, the conversation naturally turned to the ceremonies of the day, and a dispute arose whether the officiating clergy ought to wear the black hoods of the Confraternity in the processions which formed part of the service.

Orso Paolo, one of the Vincenti family, gave it as his opinion that they should wear their surplices, alleging that to be the ancient and fitting custom.

"No!" cried Ruggero Grimaldi, "they ought to wear the black hoods;" giving reasons equally authoritative for his view of the question.

The strife waxed warm. The villagers took one side or the other; "hoods," and "surplices," became the party cries. From words they came to blows, and Orso Paolo, the only man of the Vincenti family present, being sore pressed in the struggle, rashly drew out a pistol, and mortally wounded Ruggero Grimaldi's eldest son.

So the story begins, and as it is one of the few in Renucci's "*Novelle*" that are worth translating, we will give the sequel.

The rage and fury of Grimaldi and his party were now worked up to the highest pitch. The mass was interrupted, the church deserted, and the whole village a scene of uproar. Orso Paolo fled as soon as he had fired the fatal shot, pursued by his enemies, who overtook and surrounded him. His fate had been sealed on the spot, but that, quick as lightning, he burst through the throng and darted into a house of which the door stood open. It was the house of Grimaldi, his deadly foe, but there was no other chance of escaping instant death. To close and bar the door, and stand on his defence, was the work of a moment. Corsican houses are strongholds; Orso Paolo was in possession of the enemy's fortress. He threatens death to the first assailant, and the boldest recoil. What was to be done? It was proposed to set fire to the house, but Ruggero's youngest son, a child of seven or eight years old, had been left asleep in the house when the family went to church. He would perish in the flames. At that thought Grimaldi became irresolute. Just at this moment the eldest son is brought from the church, bleeding to death from his mortal wound, amidst lamentations and women's shrieks. At that spectacle Ruggero can no longer contain himself. Frantic with grief, he runs to set fire to his own house. The voice of nature pleading for his remaining child is stifled by passion and resentment. The tears and expostulations of the wretched mother are of no avail; they have no influence over the mind of the infuriated father.

"What are you doing, cruel Ruggero?" she cried, in the midst of sobs

"ALF. 'What! and all for a miserable hen?'

"FAB. 'Yes.'

and groans; "Is it for you to fill up our cup of misery? Will you destroy the dearest and sweetest of our hopes? One son is gasping his last breath before our eyes, the other, still in infancy, will perish from the transports of your rage. Who, then, will be the support of our miserable old age? Who will defend us from the insults of the powerful?"

"So that Orso Paolo perish, let the world be at an end!" exclaimed Ruggero. Such is the terrible force of the passions in the human breast.

Ruggero's house is burning, the fire crackles, the flames burst forth, the sparkles fill the air. Vincenti, involved in smoke and flame, rushes from place to place, seeking a retreat to prolong his life for a few moments. All at once he is startled by the wailing cries of a child. He directs his steps towards it, and discovers, with amazement, the son of his cruel enemy. Struck with indignation at the father's barbarity, he suddenly raises his hand to take vengeance on the child of his relentless adversary. The boy utters a plaintive cry, and stretches its little hands towards him, trembling and frightened.

"Take courage, my boy, take courage!" said Vincenti, snatching him to his bosom; "you see a man who is not deaf to the voice of pity. If Heaven will not protect your innocency, at least you shall die in the arms of a second father."

Meanwhile, the fire spreads through every part of the building; nothing can resist the fury of the devouring flames. Fanned by the wind, they surge in waves, ever greedy of new food. The roof quivers, the floors crack, the whole falls with a terrible crash. What chance was there for Vincenti's escape with life? He had abandoned all hopes.

Ruggero, satiated with vengeance, retires to the house of a relation, to which his wounded son had been removed. The spectacle of his sufferings, his imminent danger, and the sobs and lamentations of his inconsolable wife, awaken in his soul the affections of a father. A faint ray of reason penetrates his mind, and he perceives all the horrors of his proceeding. Trouble, remorse, repentance, succeed; his heart is wrung with anguish, and he attempts his own life. Friends interfere to restrain him.

At the news of the atrocity committed by the Grimaldi, in firing the house and leaving their enemy to perish in the ruins, the kinsmen of Orso Paolo assemble and rush to Monte d'Olmo, threatening vengeance on the perpetrators. The Grimaldi rally round Ruggero to shield him from his exasperated enemies. Just then, shouts are raised in the piazza, mingled with the name of Vincenti, and at intervals with gentler sounds which speak to the heart of the wife of Ruggero.

She flies to the window, and exclaiming, "Oh heaven! Orso Paolo!

"ALF. 'And it is, doubtless, in compliance with the prayers of one of these two families that you have interfered to terminate this quarrel?'

"FAB. 'Oh! not at all. They would have exterminated one another to the very last man rather than have made a single step towards each other. No, no; it is at the entreaty of my brother.'" . . . .

The action of this scene consists in the formal but unwilling reconciliation of the two clans, represented by their chiefs, in the presence of a *juge de paix;* in token of which a hen was to be presented by the Orlando to the Colonna. The situation affords scope for ludicrous disputes whether it should be a white hen or a black one—dead or alive—which should hold out his hand first, and so on; mixed with the more serious question, whether they met on equal terms, only four Orlandi having been slain against five Colonne, but four Orlandi wounded to one Colonna — the Colonne "counting the wounded for nothing," if they did not die of their wounds.

The main plot is beside our purpose. The scene changes

My son! My son! My son!" falls speechless and fainting on the floor. The spectacle which produced this vivid emotion was that of the noble Vincenti, who, scorched, and covered with ashes, and pressing the child firmly to his breast, was hastening on amid the acclamations and *evviras* of the populace. He had taken refuge under an arch of the staircase, clasping the child firmly in his arms.

Ruggero's wife, recovering from her swoon, runs and throws herself into the arms of Vincenti, calling him the preserver and father of her beloved son. Ruggero, full of admiration and gratitude, salutes Vincenti, with a modest humility, invoking his pardon, and begging his friendship. Vincenti embraces him, pardons him, and swears eternal friendship for him. The wounded youth unexpectedly recovers, the two factions become friends, and the generous Vincenti, loaded with praises and benedictions, had the happiness to extinguish an inveterate feud between the two families, and thus restore peace to the community of Castel d'Acqua.

to Paris, and the catastrophe may be imagined from the words of Fabian in the last act, which give, alas! too true a picture of what the social state of Corsica was.

"'A Corsican family is the ancient hydra, one of whose heads has no sooner been cut off than there springs forth another, which bites and tears in the place of the one that has been severed from the trunk. What is my will, sir? My will is to kill him who has killed my brother!'

"'You are determined to kill me, sir! How?'

"FAB. 'Oh, be satisfied! Not from behind a wall, not through a hedge, as is the mode in my country, as is the practice there; but, as it is done here, *à la mode Française*, with a frilled shirt and white gloves; — and you see, sir, I am in fighting costume.'"

But we must return to our Rambles, trusting to the indulgent reader's forgiveness, if our pen sometimes rambles too. On leaving Olmeto, the road skirts the Gulf of Valinco, and, after touching the little port of Propriano, ascends to Sartene. This town, the seat of one of the five *sous-préfettures* into which the island is divided, stands on the summit of a hill, the plain below being covered with olive-yards and fruit-trees, with vineyards on the slopes, and groves of ilex further up. The place has a melancholy aspect, all the houses being of the rudest construction, built of unhewn granite, black with age, and very lofty. It is divided into two quarters; one inhabited by wealthy families, among which, we were told, there are fifteen worth 200,000 *francs* each; and the other by the lower class of people, a turbulent race, between whom and the patricians there have long been bloody feuds, breaking out into open war.

The country between Sartene and Bonifacio is wild and mountainous; and the road winding along the sides of the hills, many fine points of view are presented. To the northward, the eye rested on the lofty peak of Monte Incudine, and the long ridge of the Cascione, the high pasturages of which are occupied during the summer months by the shepherds of Quenza and other villages of the Serra. Southward, we have the coast, deeply indented, the blue Mediterranean, and, at about two hours from Sartene, the distant mountains of Sardinia, in faint outline. Now, there is in sight the grey tower of one of the old feudal castles, overgrown with wood, and rising among pinnacles of rock; vast forests clothe some of the mountain-sides, and everywhere we find the arbutus, the myrtle, and evergreen shrubbery. Here it contrasts well with the red and grey rocks we see around. That reddish rock is a compact granite, evidently admitting of a high polish. There are quarries by the side of the road, which is cut through it; and we are informed that it is sent to Rome for works of art.

Corsica is rich in valuable marbles, as yet turned to little account. Not far from Olmeto, in this route, in the canton of Santa Lucia, is found a beautiful granite, peculiar to the island. They call it *orbicularis*. It has a blueish cast, with white and black spots. I have observed it among the choice specimens with which the chapel of the Medici, at Florence, is so richly inlaid. The Corsican mountains present a variety of other fine granites, with porphyry and serpentine, in some of which agates and jaspers are incorporated. Of marbles proper, there are quarries in the island of a statuary marble, of a pure and dazzling whiteness, said to be equal to the best Carrara. Blocks of it,

from five to eight feet thick, can be obtained from a single layer. Blueish-grey and pale yellow marbles are found near Corte and Bastia. But of metalliferous rocks and deposits the island cannot boast ; a few iron mines, that of Olmeta in particular, one of copper, another of antimony, and one of manganese, form the scanty catalogue. It is to the island of Elba that we must look for mineral wealth.

Connected with the mineralogy of Corsica, I would just mention, in passing, that the island abounds in warm, sulphureous, and chalybeate springs, some of them strongly impregnated with carbonic acid gas. Those of Orezza, Puzzichello, and the Fiumorbo, are in great repute; and I collect from the *procès-verbals* of the Council-General, that the mineral waters of Corsica are considered objects of much importance, considerable sums being annually voted for making baths, with roads to them, and encouraging parties engaged in opening them to the public.

Descending from the heights, after halting at a solitary post-house, we cross a large tract of partially-cultivated flats, through which the Ortolo flows sluggishly into the Gulf of Roccapina. Again we climb a ridge, and the mountains of Sardinia rise distinctly before us over the straits and islands beneath us. The road now approaches the Mediterranean, crossing the heads of the small Gulfs of Figari and Ventiligni. Many streams flow into them through a country uninhabited, and said to be unhealthy.

Some miles succeed of the undulating shrubbery of the *maquis*, over a poor and rugged surface, till we surmount the last ridge, and, suddenly, Bonifacio appears across the harbour, crowning a rocky peninsula rising boldly from the sea, which washes almost the whole circuit of its base.

The chalk cliffs are of a dazzling whiteness, and scooped out by the action of the waves and the weather into the most fantastic shapes. Their entire *enceinte* is surrounded

BONIFACIO ON THE SEA-SIDE.

by fortifications, screening from sight most of the town; the church domes, with watch-towers and a massive citadel, alone breaking the picturesque outline. At the foot of the road, along the harbour-side, lies the *Marino*, inhabited by fishermen, and the seat of a small coasting trade and some commerce across the straits with the island of Sardinia.

To this Marino we rumble down the steep bank on the opposite side of the creek, through ilex woods festooned with wild vines, and, lower down, through olive groves. We travelled in the *coupé* of the *diligence* from Sartene with a young Corsican officer in the French service, who

had come on leave from Dieppe to bid farewell to his family at Bonifacio, expecting to be employed in the expedition to the East. We talked of the coming war, with an almost impregnable fortress before us, memorable for its obstinate resistance to sieges, as remarkable in old times as that in which both, probably, of my fellow-travellers were, twelve months afterwards, engaged. On approaching the place, we witnessed a scene which gave us some idea of the warmth of family feeling among the Corsicans. At the foot of the descent, a mile from the town, the *diligence* suddenly stopped. By the road-side a group, of all ages and both sexes, was waiting its arrival. What fond greetings! what tender embraces! A young urchin seized his brother's sword, almost as long as himself; the mother and sisters clung to his side. Leaving him to walk to the town thus happily escorted, we are set down on the quay. The only access to the town itself is by a steep inclined plane, with slopes and steps cut in the rock. No wheel carriage ever enters the place. We pass under a gloomy arch in the barbican, surmounted by a strong tower, and establish ourselves in a very unpromising *locanda*, after vainly searching for better quarters.

CHAP. XXIV.

Bonifacio. — Foundation and History. — Besieged by Alfonso of Arragon. — By Dragut and the Turks. — Singularity of the Place. — Its Mediæval Aspect. — The Post-office. — Passports. — Detention. — Marine Grottoes. — Ruined Convent of St. Julian.

BONIFACE, Marquis of Tuscany, one of the noblest and bravest of Charlemagne's peers, was entrusted by his feeble successor with the defence of the most salient point in the southern frontier of his dominions against the incessant ravages of the Saracen Corsairs from Barbary and Spain. Created Count of Corsica, Boniface founded, in 830, the strong fortress, on the southern extremity of the island, which bears his name. A massive round tower, called *Il Torrione*, the original citadel, still proudly crowns the heights, having withstood for ages the storms of war and the tempests which lash its exposed and sea-girt site. Three other ancient towers, including the barbican already mentioned, strengthened the position; and others, with ramparts, curtains, and bastions, were added to the works in succeeding times, till the whole circuit of the rocky *plateau* bristles with defensive works. Within these the town is closely packed in narrow streets; — but of that hereafter.

Of its history it need only be mentioned, that after passing to the Pisans, the Genoese got possession of the place by a stratagem, and it remained for many centuries under their protection, but enjoying great independent privileges. Genoese families of distinction settled there, and, during the wars with the Corsicans and their allies, Bonifacio steadfastly adhered to the fortunes of the Republic.

In the course of these wars, the place sustained two sieges, so signalised by the vigour and obstinacy of the attack and defence, especially by the heroic resistance of the Bonifacians and the extremity of suffering they endured, that these sieges are memorable amongst the most famous of either ancient or modern times.

In 1420, Alfonso of Arragon, having pretensions on Corsica, invested Bonifacio by sea and land with a powerful force, supported by his partisan, Vincintello d'Istria, at the head of his Corsican vassals. The siege, which lasted five months, was vigorously pressed on the part of the Spaniards, and met by a defence equally determined. Night and day, a terrible shower of stone balls and other missiles was hurled at the walls and into the town by the besiegers' engines, both from the fleet and the position occupied by the king's army on a neighbouring hill. The besiegers also threw arrows from the ships' towers and round-tops, and leaden acorns from certain hand-bombards, of cast metal, hollow, like a reed, as they are described by the Corsican historian, these leaden acorns being propelled by fire, and piercing through a man in armour. Artillery, the great arm in modern sieges, thus helped to sweep the ranks of the devoted Bonifacians. Seventy years before, it had been employed, in a rude shape, by the English at

the battle of Créci. The walls and towers crumbled under the storm of heavier missiles discharged by the machines of ancient warfare, and the houses were laid in ruins. Twice, practicable breaches were effected, and the Spaniards, bravely mounting to the assault, which lasted several days, were repulsed with severe loss; the women of Bonifacio, as well as the priests and monks, vyeing with the townsmen in heroic courage while defending the breaches. Then, both sexes and every age worked night and day in throwing up barricades and repairing the walls.

In the face of this obstinate defence, Alfonso, despairing of being able to carry the place by assault, determined on forcing the enemy to surrender from starvation, during a protracted siege; and, still pouring missiles incessantly into the place, he maintained a close blockade by sea and land, drawing chains across the harbour to prevent supplies being thrown in. The corn magazine had been burnt; and the besieged, reduced to the last extremity, were compelled to devour the most loathsome herbs and animals. Many, wounded and helpless, would have been carried off by hunger had not the compassion of the women afforded them relief; for the kind-hearted women of Bonifacio, we are told, actually offered their breasts to their brothers, children, blood-relations, and sponsors; and there was no one during the terrible siege of Bonifacio who had not sucked the breast of a woman. They even, it is said, made a cheese of their milk, and sent it to the king, as well as threw bread from the walls, to disguise their state of distress from the Spaniards.

The republic of Genoa, receiving intelligence of the extremity to which its faithful town was reduced, lost no time in fitting out a fleet to convey to its aid a strong

reinforcement, with supplies of arms and food; but the season was so stormy that for three months, between September and January (1421), the expedition was detained in the harbour of Genoa.

Meanwhile, the townsmen, almost in despair, listened to the honourable terms offered by the King of Arragon, and at last agreed to capitulate if no relief arrived within forty days. But the king refusing to allow them to send messengers to Genoa, they hastily built a small vessel, and lowering it by ropes from the rock, then let down the devoted crew, who, at every peril, were to convey the magistrates' letters to the senate of Genoa. Followed to the point of rock by multitudes of the citizens, the women, it is said, by turns offered them their breasts: food there was little or none to take with them.

After fifteen days of terrible suspense, during which the churches were open from early morning till late at night, the people praying for deliverance from their enemies and for forgiveness of their sins, and going in procession, barefoot, though the winter was severe, from the cathedral of St. Mary to St. Dominic and the other churches, chanting litanies;—at last, when hopes were failing, the little vessel crept under the rock by night, and the crew, giving the signal and being drawn up by ropes, brought the joyful news to the anxious crowd that the Genoese fleet was close at hand. The period for the surrender was come, when sorrow was turned to joy. The bells pealed, fire signals were lighted on all the towers, and shouts of exultation rose to heaven. The Arragonese thundered at the gates, demanding the surrender, for the relieving fleet was not yet descried. The Bonifacians asserted that relief had arrived in the night; and, to countenance the assertion, there appeared bands of

armed men, who marched round the battlements, with glittering lances and armour, and the standard of Genoa at their head; for the women of Bonifacio had put on armour, so that, like the female peasantry of the coast of Cardigan, in their red whittles, when the French landed during the war of the revolution, the force opposed to the enemy was apparently doubled or tripled.

Alfonso of Arragon, seeing this, exclaimed, "Have the Genoese wings, that they can come to Bonifacio when we are keeping a strict blockade by land and by sea?" And again he gave orders for the assault, and his engines shot a storm of missiles against the place. Three days afterwards, the relieving fleet anchored off the harbour, and some brave Bonifacians, swimming off to the ships, horrified the Genoese by their haggard and famine-worn features. After a terrible fight, which lasted for seven hours — ship jammed against ship in the narrow channel, and the Bonifacians hurling firebrands, harpoons, and all kinds of missiles on such of the enemy's ships as they could reach from the walls and towers — the Genoese burst the chain across the harbour, and unbounded was the joy of the famished townsmen when seven ships, loaded with corn, were safely moored along the Marino. Alfonso of Arragon raised the siege, and, abandoning his enterprise in deep mortification, sailed for Italy.

The citizens of Bonifacio displayed equal heroism in defence of their town in 1554. It was then the turn of Henry IV. of France to invade Corsica. Invited by Sampiero and the other patriot chiefs, the French troops, acting in concert with the island militia, drove the Genoese from all their positions except some fortified places on the coast; while the Turks, the natural enemies of the republic,

co-operating with the French, appeared off the island with a powerful fleet, under the command of their admiral, Dragut, and laid siege to Bonifacio.

The defence offered by the townsmen was all the more obstinate from their being inspired with the sentiment that it was a religious duty to fight against the Infidel. Again the women rushed to the ramparts, and fell gloriously in the breach. The Turks had been repulsed with great slaughter in repeated assaults, and Dragut had drawn off his forces to some distance, disconcerted, and almost resolved to raise the siege, when an unexpected occurrence brought it to an end. An inhabitant of Bonifacio was entrusted by the senate of Genoa to carry over a sum of money, and announce the approach of succour to the besieged town. Landing at Girolata, he was making his way through the island, when, betrayed by one of his guides, he was arrested, and brought to De Thermes, the French general. Means were found of inducing the Genoese emissary to betray his employers. He was instructed to proceed to Bonifacio with Da Mare, a Corsican noble, and engage the authorities to surrender, informing them that the Genoese could afford them no relief.

The stratagem succeeded. The letters of credence with which the traitor had been furnished at Genoa satisfied the commandant of the truth of his mission, and he consented to deliver up the place to Da Mare, on condition that the town should be saved from pillage, and the soldiers conducted to Bastia, and embarked for Genoa. But when the Turks saw those brave men, who had foiled all their assaults by an obstinate defence, file out of the place, they fell on them, and massacred them without mercy. Moreover, Dragut demanded that Bonifacio should be put into

his hands, or that he should receive an indemnity of 25,000 crowns. It was impossible to deliver up a town to be sacked by the Turks, the inhabitants of which it was policy to conciliate, nor could De Thermes provide the sum required. He promised, however, speedy payment, and sent his nephew to the Turks as an hostage. Dragut then sailed for the Levant, in dudgeon with his allies, and disgusted with an enterprise which had terminated so little to his honour. Bonifacio, with the rest of Corsica, was soon afterwards restored by the treaty of Château-Cambresis to the Genoese, who repaired and considerably added to the fortifications.

One easily conceives that the rock fortress must have been impregnable in ancient times, if bravely defended. Even now it is a place of considerable strength, garrisoned by the French, who have erected barracks and improved the works. But the place still singularly preserves the character of a fortified town of the Middle Ages. Nothing seems changed except that French sentries pace the battlements instead of Genoese. There are the old towers, walls, churches, and houses;—the houses, tall and gloomy, many of them having the arms of Genoese families carved in stone over the portals. A network of narrow and irregular streets spreads over the whole *plateau* within the walls, which rise from the very edge of the cliffs. There is not a yard of vacant space, except an esplanade and *place d'armes*, where the promontory narrows at its southern extremity. The only entrance is under the vaulted archway of the barbican, still as jealously guarded as if Saracen, Turk, or Spaniard threatened an attack. This tower commands the approach from the Marino by the broad ramp, a long inclined plane, at a sharp angle, the ascent of which,

en échelon, by the troops of diminutive mules and asses employed for conveying all articles necessary for subsistence and use in the town, it was painful to witness. The streets are as void of every kind of vehicle as those of Venice, and almost as unsavoury as its canals. There is scarcely room for two loaded mules to pass each other. Every morning, nearly the whole population pours forth, with their beasts of burthen, to their labour in the country, there being no villages in the canton; returning to their homes in the evening. They are an industrious race, snatching their subsistence from a barren soil.

Few strangers visit Bonifacio, and those who do must be content with very indifferent accommodations. We were lodged *au premier* of a gaunt *locanda*, our last resource, after exploring the place for better quarters. Its best recommendation was the zeal and kindness of the host; and even the resources of his culinary skill, which, I believe, could have produced a *ragout* from a piece of leather, failed for want of materials on which to exercise it. The supplies of flesh, fowl, and—strange to say—fish, were scanty and bad. The French officers in garrison messed, *en pension*, at our hotel, but their fare, limited by a close economy, was not only meagre, but, with all the accompaniments of the table, absolutely disgusting.

To make matters worse, we were detained several days beyond our allotted time in this ill-provisioned fortress by an unexpected mischance. Armed with Foreign Office passports, current at least through the friendly states of France and Sardinia without the slightest hindrance, we had taken the additional precaution of proposing to have them *visé* by the French and Sardinian Legations in London, that there might be no sort of obstacle to our crossing from

one of the two islands in our route to the other. The *visé* was refused as perfectly unnecessary; and even at Ajaccio, where we passed some hours at the *Préfeture*, our passports were returned to us on mere inspection. Greatly, however, to our mortification, we discovered, at Bonifacio, that international conventions between friendly governments had no force in this out-of-the-way corner of the civilised world. We could not be allowed to embark for Sardinia without authority from the Administration at Ajaccio, which it would take at least forty-eight hours to procure. All arguments were vain; the Foreign Office passport could not be recognised; the orders were precise for a strict *surveillance* of all persons endeavouring to cross the Straits. As private individuals and English gentlemen, we were on particularly pleasant terms with the *maire* and his son; but, officially, such was their language, they had nothing to show that we were not brigands meditating escape. Officials generally, and foreign officials especially, are not to be moved by any force of circumstances from their regular track.

Unwilling to submit, and anxious to get forward, we lost twenty-four hours of precious time in vainly negotiating with the master of a small vessel to smuggle us over. He would be well paid, and we proposed going to some unfrequented part of the coast, from whence he could take us off. But, tempting as the offers were, after much deliberation, they were rejected. Such things were common a short time before, and hundreds of the banditti had been ferried over to the coast of Sardinia; but now there was a sharp look-out, and discovery would be ruin. Insignificant as is the commerce of Bonifacio, it is well watched by a staff of *douaniers*, consisting of a captain, four *sous-*

officiers, and thirteen or fourteen *préposés*, *matelots*, &c., besides *officiers de santé* and swarms of *gendarmes*. They were everywhere: at our landing; while sketching; always in pairs; and seeming to dodge our steps. Two presented themselves while we were at supper the evening after our arrival. The passports had been exhibited; — what could they want with us? what offence had we committed? Their business was with the innkeeper; he had omitted to fix a lantern at his door! He hated the French like a true Corsican. He would not pay even decent respect to the officers, his guests, and boasted of starving them to the last fraction his contract for the mess allowed; while nothing was good enough for the Englishmen.

Piétro was, indeed, a true Corsican; had killed his man, given a *coup*, as he called it, to his enemy, was condemned to death, but bought off. *Encore;* a man he had offended came to his hotel, and called for food. They sat down to table in company, Piétro observing that his enemy frequently kept his hand on a side-pocket. After supper, the man asked for a chamber to sleep. Piétro replied that they were all occupied, but he might sleep with him. The other was staggered at his coolness, and, hesitating to comply, Piétro seized him, and finding a pistol secreted on his person, doubled him up, and kicked him down stairs.

Our host was not singular in his disaffection to the French. The Bonifacians feel their thraldom more perhaps than any other people in Corsica, overshadowed as their small population is by a strong garrison and a host of *douaniers* and *gendarmes*. Republican ideas prevail; and they have not forgotten the days when their important town was more an ally, than a dependance, of Genoa. Now, from their small population, a single deputy represents

them in the departmental council, while Ajaccio sends twenty-nine and Bastia twenty-five members. The Bonifacians despise their masters. "The French are inconstant," said an inhabitant, high in office, with whom I was talking politics; "they have *tant de petitesses;* they have no national character: we have, and you;—our very quarrels, which are deep and lasting, show it."

Everything is primitive in Bonifacio, except the emblems of French domination. On the evening of our arrival, having threaded my way alone with some difficulty through a labyrinth of dark streets and lanes to the Post Office, I found it closed; and there being no apparent means of announcing my errand, was departing in despair, when a neighbour good-humouredly cried out, "*Tirate la corda, signore!*" After some search, for it was getting dark, I discovered a string, running up the wall of the house to the third story. Pulling it lustily, at last a window opened, and an old woman put her head out, inquiring, in a shrill voice, "*Que volete?*" Having made known my wants, after some delay, steps were heard slowly descending the stairs. Admitted at length into the *bureau*, the old crone, spectacle on nose, proceeded very deliberately to spell over, by a feeble lamplight, the addresses of a bundle of letters taken from a shelf. The process was excruciating, anxious as we were for news from home. She could make nothing of my friend's truly Saxon name;—what foreign official can ever decipher English names? Mine was more pronounceable, and as I kept repeating both, she caught that, and, incapable as I should have thought her of making a pun, she exclaimed at last, in despair, "*Forestier, ecco! sono tutti forestière,*" tossing me the whole bundle to choose for myself. Happily, I was not disappointed.

We shall not easily forget Bonifacio. Our detention within the narrow bounds of the fortress-town afforded us leisure to realise the scenes which the crowded *enceinte* must have offered during its memorable sieges. The combined effects, too, of loathsome smells — the filth of the purlieus being indescribable — of bad diet, confinement, and the irritation natural to Englishmen under detention, brought on suddenly severe attacks of diarrhœa, though we were both before in robust health. Our sufferings shadowed out, however faintly, the miseries endured by a crowded population during the sieges, and again when half the inhabitants of Bonifacio became victims to the plague in 1582—a scourge which then devastated Corsica and parts of Italy.

Gasping for pure air, we were forbidden by the ever-watchful *gendarmes* to walk on the town ramparts. From early dawn till late evening, the eternal clang of hand corn-mills forbade repose in our *locanda*. The neighbouring country has few attractions, even if we had been in a state to profit by them. All interest is concentrated in the place itself. Our steps were therefore especially attracted to the open area forming the southern extremity of the Cape, as already mentioned. There at least we could breathe the fresh air, look down on the blue Mediterranean washing the base of the chalk cliffs, far beneath, and trace the outline of the coast of Sardinia across the Straits. The Gallura mountains

OUTLINE OF SARDINIA FROM BONIFACIO.

rose boldly on the horizon, and the low island of Madaléna, our proposed landing-place, was distinctly visible. It needed not that we should indulge imagination in picturing to ourselves Castel Sardo, and other places along the coast, which we hoped soon to visit. The esplanade was generally solitary, and suited our musings. One evening, the silence was broken by a melancholy chant from the chapel of a ruined monastery within the guarded *enceinte*. It was a service for the dead, at which a prostrate crowd assisted in deep devotion. The sentries on the walls rested on their arms, and we stood at the open door, facing the western sky and the rolling waves, listening to strains of wailing which would have suited the times of the siege and the plague.

Nearer the town stands the old church of the Templars, dedicated to St. Dominic, of fine Gothic architecture, full of interest for its armorial and other memorials of the knightly defenders of the faith, and of noble Genoese families. Over the edge of the cliff towers the massive *Torrione*, the original fortress of the Marquis Bonifacio, consecrated in memory as long the bulwark of the island against the incursions of Saracen corsairs. Here, is the spot where the hastily-built galley, with its adventurous crew, was lowered down the face of the cliff, to convey to Genoa the intelligence of the extremity to which the citizens of Bonifacio were reduced when besieged by Alfonso of Arragon. There, is a ladder of rude steps, cut in the chalk cliffs to the edge of the water, two hundred feet beneath, the descent of which it made one dizzy to contemplate. Perhaps, under cover of night, the now ruinous steps have been boldly trodden in a sally for surprising the enemy, or stealthily mounted by emissaries from without,

conveying intelligence to the beleaguered party. Perhaps, in the Genoese times, some Romeo and Juliet, of rival families, found the means of elopement by this sequestered staircase. One could imagine shrouded figures gliding from the convent church close by — the perilous descent, the light skiff tossing beneath, with its white sails a-peak, waiting to bear off the lovers to freedom and bliss. For what legends and tales of romance, real or imaginary, have we materials here!

It is by sea only that one can escape from Bonifacio, except by miles of dreary road. To the sea we looked for ours. *En attendant*, we tried our wings to the utmost length of the chain which bound us to the rock. Procuring a boat, we pulled out of the harbour, and round the jutting points crowned by the fortress, half inclined to pitch the *padrone* overboard, and make a straight course for the opposite coast of Sardinia. Not driven to that extremity, we wiled away the time pleasantly enough in a visit to the caverns worn by the sea in the chalk cliffs, which front its surges. Some of these are exceedingly picturesque. Their entrances festooned with hanging boughs, they penetrate far into the interior of the rocks, and the water percolating through their vaulted roofs, has formed stalactites of fantastic shapes. The boat

CAVE UNDER BONIFACIO.

glides through the arched entrance, and we find ourselves in the cool and grateful shade of these marine grottoes. Fishes are flitting in the clear water; limpid streams oozing through the rocks form fresh-water basins, with pebbly bottoms; and the channels from the blue sea, flowing over the chalk, become cerulean. These are, indeed, the halls of Amphitrite, fitting baths of Thetis and her nymphs. Poetic imagination has never pictured anything more enchanting.

One afternoon, we walked a mile out of the town, up a narrow valley in the limestone cliffs, to the ruined convent of St. Julian. The bottom of the valley is laid out in gardens, with cross walls, and channels for irrigation. The gardens appeared neglected, but there were some vines and fig-trees, pomegranates, and crops of a large-growing kale. The ruins lie at the head of the glen,

BONIFACIO FROM THE CONVENT IN THE VALLEY.

facing Bonifacio and the sea; the walls of the convent and church still standing, approached by a broad paved

way on a flight of marble steps. Seated on these, we enjoyed at leisure a charming view.

Vineyards and plots of cultivated land overspread the slopes on either side of the valley. There were scattered olive-trees, and bamboos waving in the wind. The old convent walls, mantled with ivy, contrasted with a chapel at the foot of the steps, having a handsome dome, covered with bright glazed tiles of green, red, and black, and surmounted by a cross — the only portion of the conventual buildings still perfect. In the distance was the little land-locked haven, with a brig and some small lateen-sailed vessels moored alongside the Marino. Above it rose the fortress-town, with its towers and battlements. The sound of the church bells tolling for vespers rose, softened by distance, up the valley. Ravens were croaking over the ruins of the convent, and lizards frisking on the banks and the marble steps on which we reposed. It was a fitting spot for a Sunday afternoon's meditation — our last in Corsica!

CHAP. XXV.

ISLAND OF SARDINIA.—*Cross the Straits of Bonifacio.*—*The Town and Harbour of La Madelena.*—*Agincourt Sound, the Station of the British Fleet in* 1803—*Anecdotes of Nelson.*——*Napoleon Bonaparte repulsed at La Madelena.*

RELEASED, at length, from our irksome detention by the return of the courier with the passports *visés* from Ajaccio, and a boat we had hired, meanwhile, lying ready at the Marino to carry us over to Sardinia, not a moment was lost in getting under sail to cross the straits.

The Bocche di Bonifacio were called by the Romans *Fossa Fretum*, and by the Greeks *Tappros*, a trench, from their dividing the islands of Corsica and Sardinia like a ditch or dyke. These straits are considered dangerous by navigators, from the violence of the squalls gushing suddenly from the mountains and causing strong currents, especially during the prevalence of winds from the north-west during nine months of the year. Lord Nelson describes them during one of these squalls as "looking tremendous, from the number of rocks and the heavy seas breaking over them." In another letter he says, "We worked the 'Victory' every foot of the way from Asinara to this anchorage, [off La Madelena,] blowing hard from Longo Sardo, under double-reefed topsails." The diffi-

culties of the Bonifacio passage can hardly be understood by a landsman who has not visited the straits, but they are stated to have been so great, "and the ships to have passed in so extraordinary a manner, that their captains could only consider it as a providential interposition in favour of the great officer who commanded them." *

It has been my fortune to pass these straits on three several occasions when they were perfectly calm. During the passage from Corsica in an open boat, which I am now relating, there was so little wind that, with all the spread of high-peaked sails a Mediterranean boat can carry, we made but little way, and the surface was so unruffled that my friend was able to sketch at ease the outline of the Corsican mountains, from which we were slowly receding. It was, however, pleasurable to linger midway between the two islands, retracing our route in the one by the lines of its mountain ranges, and anticipating fresh delight in penetrating those of the Gallura now in prospect. The appearance of a French revenue cutter to windward tended to reconcile us to the failure of our plan of getting smuggled across the straits, which might have led to more serious consequences than the detention we suffered.

LOOKING BACK ON CORSICA.

The coast line on both sides of the channel, as on all

* *Clarke and M'Arthur's Life of Nelson*, vol. ii. p. 336.

the shores of the two islands, is remarkably bold; and the scene was diversified by the groups of rocky islets scattered across the straits, and described in a former chapter as the broken links of a chain which once united Corsica with the mountain system of the north-east portion of the island of Sardinia. They are composed entirely of a fine-grained red granite. In some of the islets lying nearest the Corsican coast quarries were worked to supply blocks and columns for the temples and palaces of imperial Rome. Quarries of the same material were also worked by the Romans, as we shall find presently, on the coast of Sardinia, opposite these islands.

With two exceptions, these "Intermediate Islands" are uninhabited. They were considered of so little importance that, till the middle of the last century, it was considered a question which of them belonged to Sardinia and which to Corsica. It was then easily settled by drawing a visual line equidistant from Point Lo Sprono on the latter, and Capo Falcone on the former; it being agreed that all north of this line should belong to Corsica, and all south of it to Sardinia.

The distance between the two capes is about ten nautical miles. To the westward of Capo Falcone lies the small harbour of Longo Sardo, or Longone, the nearest landing-place from Bonifacio, from which it has long carried on a contraband trade; its proximity to Corsica also making it the asylum of the outlaws exiled from that island. A new town, called Villa Teresa, built on a more healthy spot on the neighbouring heights, has received a considerable access of population from the same source.

The Capes Falcone, with La Marmorata close by, and La Testa forming the north-west point of Sardinia, are all

of the same formation as the rocky islands in the straits already mentioned, and, like them, this district furnished the Romans with many of the granite columns which still form magnificent ornaments of the Eternal City. Those of the Pantheon are said to have been excavated near Longone; and several similar ones, as well as rude blocks, may still be seen in the quarries on the promontory of Santa Reparata, near which the remains of some Roman villas have also been discovered. In later days we find the value of the Gallura granite appreciated by the Pisans. Their Duomo, built by Buschetto in 1063, soon after their possession of Sardinia, shows the beauty of the Marmorata rocks; and the Battisterio, built in 1152 by Dioti Salvi, has also much of Gallura material in its construction.

La Madelena is the largest island in the Sardinian group, and while Porto Longone is a poor place, the town and harbour of La Madelena are much frequented in the communications and trade between Corsica and Sardinia. Our course therefore was shaped for the latter, though twice the distance from shore to shore. The island of La Madelena, the *Insula Ilva*, or *Phintonis*, of the Romans, is about eleven miles in circumference. Till about a century ago it was only inhabited or frequented by shepherds, natives of Corsica, who led a nomad life, and by their constant intercourse with Corsica and Sardinia, and by intermarriages with natives of both, formed a mixed but distinct race, as the Ilvese are still considered. The town of La Madelena was only founded in 1767, some Corsican refugees being among its first settlers; but from its fine harbour, the healthiness of its site, and its convenience for commerce with Italy, it rapidly became a place of considerable population and trade.

There are numerous channels and many sheltered bays frequented by ships between the group of islands of which La Madelena is the principal. Our own course from the north-west led us through a strait between the main land of Sardinia and the islands of Sparagi, Madelena, and Caprera, which opened to view all the points of interest in its most celebrated harbour. Right ahead, it was almost closed by the little rocky islet of Santo Stefano, now defended by a fort, and remarkable for having been the scene of a severe repulse received by Napoleon at the outset of his long successful career. A point to the south, on the main land of Sardinia, marking the entrance of the Gulf of Arsachena, is called the Capo dell' Orso, from a mass of granite so exactly resembling the figure of a bear recumbent on its hind legs, that it attracted the notice of Ptolemy 1400 years ago. The island of Caprera, probably deriving its name from the wild goats till lately its sole inhabitants, presents a ridge of rugged mountains, rising in the centre to a ridge called Tagiolona, upwards of 750 feet high, with some little sheltered bays, and a few cultivated spots on its western side.

Sheltered by Caprera, La Madelena, and Santo Stefano, we find the fine anchorage of Mezzo Schifo; the town of La Madelena, for which we are steering, lying about half a mile south-west of the anchorage. This harbour, named by Lord Nelson "Agincourt Sound," was his head-quarters while maintaining the blockade of Toulon, from 1803 to 1805. He formed the highest opinion of its position for a naval station, as affording safe and sheltered anchorage, and ingress and egress with any winds. His public and private correspondence at that period shows the import-

ance he attached to its possession, and his anxiety that it should be secured permanently to the crown of England.

"If we could possess the island of Sardinia," he says, in a letter to Lord Hobart, "we should want neither Malta nor any other island in the Mediterranean. This, which is the finest of them, possesses harbours fit for arsenals, and of a capacity to hold our navy,—within twenty-four hours' sail of Toulon,—bays to ride our fleets in, and to watch both Italy and Toulon." In another letter, he says:—"What a noble harbour is formed by these islands! The world cannot produce a finer. From its position, it is worth fifty Maltas." This opinion we find repeated in a variety of forms, and with Nelson's characteristic energy of expression.

When at anchor in Agincourt Sound, he kept two or three frigates constantly cruising between Toulon and the Straits of Bonifacio, to signal any attempt of the enemy to leave their port; occasionally cruising with his whole fleet, and then retreating to head-quarters. His sudden appearance and disappearance off Toulon, in one of these exercises, with the hope of alluring the French to put to sea, led their admiral, M. Latouche-Tréville, to make the ludicrous boast, that he had chased the whole British fleet, which fled before him. This bravado so irritated Nelson, that it drew from him the well-known threat, contained in a letter to his brother: "You will have seen by Latouche's letter how he chased me, and how I ran. I keep it; and, if I take him, by God, he shall eat it!"

Our boatman pointed out to us the channel through which Lord Nelson led his fleet when at length, after more than two years' watching, the object of all his hopes

and vows was accomplished by the French fleet putting to sea. This, the eastern channel, of which the low isle of Biscie forms the outer point, is the most dangerous of all, from the sunken rocks which lie in the fairway, and its little breadth of sea room. Yet Nelson beat through it in a gale of wind, in the dusk of the evening, escaping these dangers almost miraculously. Our sailor pointed out all this with lively interest, for Nelson's name and heroic deeds are still household words among the seafaring people of La Madelena.

It was on the 19th of January, 1805, that the look-out frigate in the offing signalled to the admiral that the French fleet had put to sea. At that season there was much gaiety, in dances, private theatricals, and other amusements, on board the different ships in the harbour, and preparations for an evening's entertainment were going on at the moment the stirring signal was discovered. It was no sooner acknowledged on board the "Victory" than the responding one appeared, "Weigh immediately!" The scene of excitement and confusion ensuing the sudden departure and interruption of festivities may be easily conceived. It was a dark wintry evening; but the suddenness of the order to get under way was equalled by the skill and courage with which it was executed. The passage is so narrow that only one ship could pass at a time, and each was guided only by the stern lights of the preceding vessel. At seven o'clock, the whole of the fleet was entirely clear of the passage, and, bidding a long farewell to La Madelena, they stood to the southward in pursuit of the French fleet. The daring and determined spirit exhibited by Nelson on this particular occasion was the subject of especial eulogy in the House of Lords by his late Ma-

jesty, then Duke of Clarence; being cited as the greatest instance of his unflinching courage and constant activity.

Thus, as we have already found Corsica, we now see Sardinia, witnessing some of the boldest achievements of our great naval hero.

Further interest attaches to La Madelena from its having repulsed the attack of Napoleon, and driven him to a precipitate retreat from his first field of arms. The young soldier, after being for some months in garrison at Bonifacio, was attached, by order of Paschal Paoli, to the expedition which sailed from thence in February, 1793, to reduce La Madelena. He acted as second in command of the artillery, the whole force being under the command of General Colonna-Cesari. A body of troops having effected a lodgment on the island of Santo Stefano by night, and a battery having been thrown up and armed, a heavy fire was opened by Bonaparte on the town and its defences. They were held by a garrison of 500 men, and the fire was returned by the islanders with equal fury. The opposite shore of Gallura was lined by its brave mountaineers, who, on the French frigate being dismasted and bearing up for the Gulf of Arsachena, embarked from Parao, and attacked Santo Stefano. Their assault was so vigorous that Bonaparte found himself compelled to make a precipitate retreat from the island with a few of his followers, leaving 200 prisoners, with all the *matériel*, baggage, and artillery. In passing between the other islands, the fugitives were also attacked by some Gallurese, who, concealing themselves near Capo della Caprera, by the precision of their firing committed great havoc on the flying enemy.

Mr. Tyndale states that many of the Corsicans and Ilvese who witnessed this action, being still living when

he visited La Madelena, and relating various circumstances relative to it, he heard the following story from an old veteran, who was an eyewitness of the fact :—

"Bonaparte was superintending the firing from the battery, and watching the effect of it with his telescope, when observing the people at Madelena going to mass, he exclaimed, '*Voglio tirare alla chiesa, per far fuggire le donne!*' ('I should like to fire at the church, just to frighten the women!') While in garrison at Bonifacio, as lieutenant [? captain] of artillery, he had mortar and gun practice every morning, and had on all occasions shown the greatest precision in firing. In this instance he was no less successful, for the shell entered the church window, and fell at the foot of the image of N. S. di Madelena. It failed to burst in this presence, and this miraculous instance of religious respect had its due weight with the pious islanders, by whom it was taken up, and for a long time preserved among the sacred curiosities of the town. A natural cause was, however, soon discovered for the harmlessness of the projectile. Napoleon continued his firing; but finding that the shells took no effect, though they fell on the very spot he intended, he examined some of them, and found that they were filled with sand. '*Amici,*' he exclaimed, burning with indignation; '*eccole il tradimento;*' and the troops, who had been suffering much by the fire from Madelena, imagining that the treason was on the part of General Cesari, would have put him *alla lanterna*, had he not made his escape on board the frigate."

It has, indeed, been said that Paoli, reluctantly obeying the orders of the French Convention to undertake the expedition against Sardinia, entrusted the command to

Colonna-Cesari, his intimate friend, with instructions to secure its failure, considering Sardinia as the natural ally of their own island. However this may be, the affair terminated by the retreat of the general with the rest of his force, having thrown from Santo Stefano 500 shells and 5000 round shot into Madelena, without much effect.

We found in the harbour a Sardinian steam-ship of war*, and ten or twelve vessels of very small tonnage, engaged in the trade with Corsica, Leghorn, and Marseilles. About twenty of this class belong to the port; besides which it is frequented annually by from 200 to 300 other small vessels, principally Genoese, their united tonnage amounting to about 5000 tons. Besides this legitimate commerce, the Ilvese carry on a prosperous contraband trade, taking advantage of the numerous little creeks and bays along the rocky coasts of the island. They are naturally a seafaring people, while the Sardes manifest a decided repugnance to engage in seafaring pursuits. The quays round the port of Madelena are spacious, and the town, strag-

* The "Ichneusa," so called from the ancient name of the island. On a subsequent visit to Sardinia I had the pleasure of making an agreeable acquaintance with the officers of the "Ichneusa," the ship being one of a little squadron then employed in the service of assisting in the laying down the submarine telegraph cable between Cape Teulada and the coast of Algeria, of which I hope to be able to give some account in the sequel. The engineer of the "Ichneusa" was an Englishman, who was often ashore at our hotel while his ship lay in the harbour of La Madelena; an intelligent man, as I have always found the many of his class employed in the royal steam navy of the Sardinian government. I cannot believe that the engineers of the steam-ship "Cagliari" had any complicity with the Genoese conspirators. They worked the ship, no doubt, in compliance with orders enforced by the Italian desperadoes in possession of her with stilettoes at their throats; and it is to be regretted that peremptory measures were not taken by our Government for their release. We can only conclude that the unfortunate engineers were sacrificed to political expediency.

gling up the side of a hill, has a neat appearance, is said to be healthy, and is cleaner than any Sardinian town we saw.

There are tolerable accommodations at Santa's Hotel. The reception of foreign guests is however, I imagine, a rare occurrence, and the means of supplying the table from the resources of the island appeared scanty; so that we should have fared ill but for the kindness of an English officer long settled at Madelena, who sent some substantial contributions to our comforts, in addition to his own hospitality. The name of Captain Roberts, R.N., is so well known to all visitors, as well as among the Sardes, that it is public property, and I may be allowed to bear testimony to the high esteem in which the hearty and genial old sailor is generally held. His loss would occasion a blank at Madelena not easily filled up; and I was happy to hear on my last visit to Sardinia that his health had improved.

More English, I believe, are settled in the neighbourhood of La Madelena than in the whole island of Sardinia; if, indeed, there are any to be found, we did not hear of them. The English visitors consist principally of officers on shooting excursions from Malta. We had a very pleasant walk along the shore to the villa of an Australian colonist who, after wandering about the world, had, seemingly to his content, settled down on a small farm on the slopes of a valley a mile or two from the town. A man fond of cultivation might be very happy here, with such a climate, and the means of commanding a profusion of vegetables, fruits, and flowers. Irrigation was effected from a well provided with the simple machinery for lifting the water common in such countries, and by its aid the

gardens just seeded and planted for the spring, or rather winter, crops, so early is vegetation, looked greener and fresher than anything we had seen for a long time. The cauliflowers and peas were already making forward progress; the latter, indeed, grow wild in this neighbourhood. But while these carried us in imagination to the latter days of an English spring, the hedges of prickly pear bore witness to the arid nature of the soil and the heat of the climate; of that, indeed, we were very sensible in our walks, though the month of November had now commenced.

A cottage occupied, it was said, by an English botanist was pointed out to us; and an English family has been settled for some time in the solitude of the island of Caprera, of whose improvements great things were said. Every one spoke especially of Mrs. C.'s beautiful flower garden, and an anecdote was told respecting it, characteristic, I think, rather of Sarde than of English feeling. On some occasion when the king visited La Madelena, Mrs. C. having been requested to contribute flowers to the decorations of the festa in preparation to do honour to the royal visit, she is said to have replied: "I cultivate my flowers for my own pleasure — *pour m'amuser* — not to ingratiate myself with a court. If his majesty desires to see them, he must come to Caprera." I cannot vouch for the truth of the story, though it was in every one's mouth. What amused me was, that the islanders considered this as evincing a truly English spirit of independence, which they heartily approved.

The principal church of La Madelena, dedicated to St. Mary Magdalene, is a neat structure of granite and marble. Its decorations are less gaudy than those one usually sees,

the most valued ornaments being a pair of massive altar candlesticks and a crucifix, all of silver, the gift of Lord Nelson, in acknowledgment of the kindness and hospitality he received from the islanders while his fleet lay in the harbour. On the base of the candlesticks are enchased the arms of Nelson and Brontë, with this inscription:

VICE COMES
NELSON NILI
DUX BRONTIS ECC$^{E.}$
ST$^{E.}$ MAGDAL$^{E.}$ INS$^{E.}$
ST$^{E.}$ MAGDAL$^{E.}$
D. D. D.

It is said that when the town publicly thanked Lord Nelson for the donation, he replied: "These little ornaments are nothing; wait till I catch the French outside their port. If they will but come out, I am sure to capture them; and I promise to give you the value of one of their frigates to build a church with. I have only to ask you to pray to La Santissima Madonna that the French fleet may come out of Toulon. Do you pray to her for that, and as for capturing them, I will undertake to do all the rest."

We landed at La Madelena on the anniversary of the day when Nelson first anchored his fleet off the town just fifty years before. As we trace his career among the Mediterranean islands, recollections of those eventful times crowd on our memories. In the half century that has intervened, how has the aspect of affairs changed!

It was the eve of the feast of All Saints (1st Nov.), devoutly observed, with that of All Souls on the day following, in all Catholic countries. From daylight till ten at night the bells of St. Magdalene incessantly clanged,

and the church was thronged with successive crowds, absorbed in pious and affectionate devotion to the memories of their departed friends, according to the rites of the Roman Church. How thrilling are the deep tones of the *De Profundis* from the compositions of a good musical school! And what observance can be more touching than this periodical commemoration of the dead? There is none that more harmonises with the best feelings of our nature; and yet of all the dogmas rejected by ecclesiastical reforms, I know of none which has less pretensions to Scriptural authority or has been more mischievous, corrupting alike the priesthood and the laity, than that which makes the masses and prayers incident to the commemoration of the dead propitiatory for sins committed in the flesh.

The solemn festival brought out all the women of La Madelena, never perhaps seen to more advantage than in a costume of black silk, suited to the solemnity, with the Genoese mantle of white transparent muslin attached to the back of the head, and falling gracefully over the shoulders.

CHAP. XXVI.

Ferried over to the Main Island. — Start for the Mountain Passes of the Gallura. — Sarde Horses and Cavallante. — Valley of the Liscia. — Pass some Holy Places on the Hills. — Festivals held there. — Usages of the Sardes indicating their Eastern Origin.

THE halt at La Madelena was only a step in our route to the main island. We had still to cross a broad channel, and landing at Parao, on the Sardinian shore, horses were to be waiting for us. This arrangement, kindly made by Captain Roberts, required a day's delay. We were to proceed to Tempio, in the heart of the Gallura Mountains, under guidance of the courier in charge of the post letters.

Ferried across the channel in less than an hour, we found the horses tethered among the bushes. House there was none, which must be inconvenient when the weather is too tempestuous for crossing the strait from Parao. We took shelter from the heat under a rock, making studies of a group of picturesque shepherds, and amusing ourselves with some luscious grapes,—baskets of which were waiting for the return of the passage-boat to La Madelena,—while a pack-horse was loaded with our baggage.

The outfit for this expedition was more than usually cumbersome, as it comprised blankets and other append-

ages for camping out, if occasion required. The cavallante, however, made nothing of stowing it away, cleverly thrusting bag and baggage into the capacious leather pouches which hung balanced on each side of the stout beast, with a portmanteau across the pack-saddle. When all was done, the cavallante mounted to the top of the load, where he perched himself like an Arab on a dromedary.

The cavallo Sardo *par excellence*, such as the higher classes ride, is a strong spirited barb, highly valued. These horses are carefully broken to a peculiar step, called the "portante," something between an amble and a trot, for which we have neither a corresponding word or pace. I cannot say that I admired the pace. It only makes four or five miles an hour, and, to my apprehension, might be described as a shuffle, not being so easy as a canter, nor having the invigorating swing of a trot. The natives, however, consider the movement delightful; and a writer on Sardinia says: "*Il viaggiare in Sardegna è perciò la più dolce cosa del mondo; l'antipongo all' andare in barca col vento in poppa*"—"The travelling in Sardinia is, on this account, one of the pleasantest things in the world; I prefer it to sailing in a vessel with the wind astern."

The ordinary Sarde horse is a hardy, sure-footed animal, undersized, but capable of carrying heavy burthens. Great numbers of them are kept, as the poorest native disdains walking. They are ill fed, and have rough treatment. As pack-horses they convey all the commodities of home produce, or imported and interchanged, throughout the interior of the island, there being scarcely any roads, and consequently no wheel-carriages employed, except on the Strada

Reale, through the level plains of the Campidano, between Cagliari and Porto Torres.

The *viandanti* who conduct this traffic are a numerous and hardy class of people, much enduring in the long and toilsome journeys through such a country as their vocation requires them to traverse. We found them civil, patient, and attentive, but hard at a bargain,—so that this mode of travelling is more expensive than might be expected,—and occasionally rather independent. A curious instance of this occurred at Tempio. We had made a bargain, on his own terms, with one of these people, for horses to proceed on our route, and they were brought to the door ready for loading up and mounting, when the cavallante refused to allow our using our English saddles. Not wishing to lose time, we took considerable pains to point out that the saddles being well padded would not wring his horses' backs, conceiving that to be what he apprehended. But it was to no purpose; there seemed to be no other reason for the scruple than that a Sarde horse must be caparisoned *à la Sarde*, with high-peaked saddle and velvet housings. The cavallante, persisting, led his horses back to the stable, losing a profitable engagement rather than being willing to submit to their being equipped in a foreign fashion. After a short delay we procured others from a cavallante who made no such difficulties, and proved a very serviceable and attentive conductor.

After leaving Parao, and calling at a solitary *stazza* or farm, the track we pursued led through a wide plain watered by the Liscia. The river made many windings among meadows clothed with luxuriant herbage, and fed by numerous herds of cattle, and sheep, and goats; forming a pastoral scene of singular beauty, of which my com-

VALLEY OF THE LISCIA
Sardinia

panion's sketch, here annexed, conveys a good idea. The valley is bounded by ridges of no great elevation, partially covered with a shrubbery of myrtle, cistus, and other such underwood, among rocks and cliffs worn by the waters into fantastic shapes. We occasionally crossed spurs of these ridges, commanding extensive views of the Straits of Bonifacio, with the mountains of Corsica in the distance on the one hand, and the nearer island of Madelena on the other.

Nearly all the province of Gallura, washed by the Mediterranean on three sides, consists of mountainous tracts, with valleys intervening, similar to this of the Liscia. There is scarcely any cultivation, and they are uninhabited; almost all the towns and villages of the Capo di Sopra lying on the coast. On these plains a few shepherds lead a nomad life during the healthy season, being driven from them by the deadly *intempérie* prevailing in summer and autumn. Until lately, the whole district was notorious for the crimes of robbery and vindictive murder, for the perpetration of which, and the security of the offenders, its solitudes and natural fastnesses afforded the greatest facilities.

Continuing our route we crossed some park-like glades, with scattered forest trees, and fringed by the graceful shrubbery, the *macchia*, common to both the islands of Corsica and Sardinia. At some distance on our left (south-east) appeared a beautifully wooded hill, with a chapel on the summit, Santa Maria di Arsachena, one of the sanctuaries held in great veneration by the Gallurese. To these holy places they flock in great numbers on certain festivals, when the lonely spots, often hill-tops, surrounded by the

most wild and romantic scenery, witness devotions and festivities, to which the revels form the chief allurement.

There is a still holier place further to the south of our track, the Monte Santo, and I think its lofty summit, with a small chapel scarcely visible amid the dark verdure of the surrounding woods, was pointed out to us. It overhangs the village of Logo Santo, well described as the "Mecca of the Gallurese." The sanctity of the place was established in the thirteenth century, the tradition being that the relics of St. Nicholas and St. Trano, anchorites and martyrs here A.D. 362, were discovered on the spot by two Franciscan monks, led to Sardinia by a vision of the Virgin Mary at Jerusalem. A village grew up round the three churches then erected in honour of the Saints and the Blessed Virgin, with a Franciscan convent, long stripped of its endowments, and fallen to ruin.

On the occurrence of the festivals celebrated at these holy places, the people of the neighbouring parishes assemble in multitudes, marching in procession, with their banners at their head; and the sacred flag of Tempio, surmounted by a silver cross, is brought by the canons of the cathedral and planted on the spot. The devotions are accompanied by feasting, dancing, music, and sports, the people prolonging the revels into the night, as many of them come from far, and the festivals occupy more than one day.

That Christian rites were, from very early times, blended with festivities accordant to the national habits of the new converts, with even some alloy of pagan usages, is understood to have been a policy adopted by the founders of the faith among semi-barbarous nations—a concession to the weakness of their neophytes. Our own village wakes and

fairs, with their green boughs and flags, cakes and ale, originally held in the precincts of the church on the feast-day of the patron saint, partook of a similar character as the festivals of the Gallurese; but with us the religious element has been long extinct.

The festivals are not confined to the Gallura; they have their stations throughout the island, every district having some shrine of peculiar sanctity. Their celebration is distinguished by some peculiarities, which, in common with many other customs of the Sardes, and numerous existing monuments and remains, leave no doubt of Sardinia having been early colonised from the East. Traces may also be found in the customs of the Sardes of similarity with the Greek life and manners, derived indeed by the Greeks from the same common source.

Thus the usages of the Sardes afford, in a variety of instances, a living commentary, perhaps the best still existing, on the modes of life and thought recorded in Homer and the Bible. This they owe to their insular position, their slight admixture with other races, and the consequent tenacity with which they have adhered to their primitive traditions.

Of some of these indications of origin we may take occasion to treat hereafter, as they fall in our way. For our present purpose may we not refer to the worship in "high places" and in "groves," to which the Sardes are so zealously addicted, as a relic of practices often denounced in the Old Testament, when the sacrifice was offered to idols? They appear also to have been common and legitimate in the patriarchal age and the earlier times of the Israelitish commonwealth, Jehovah alone being the object of worship.

What more biblical, as far as the Old Testament is concerned, than the idea that worship and prayer are more acceptable to the Almighty when offered on certain spots, holy ground, remote, perhaps, from the usual haunts of the worshipper! What a living picture we have in the festivities of the religious assemblies at Logo Santo and Santa Maria di Arsachena, of the feasting and music, the songs and dances accompanying the rites of Israelitish worship in common with those of other eastern nations; not to speak of the festive character of Greek solemnities, derived, indeed, from the same source, vestiges of which, left by the Hellenic colonies, may also be traced.

However contrary these ideas and practices may be to the spirit and precepts of the Gospel, they are so inherent in the genius and traditions of the Sarde people, that I have heard it asserted that these festas give, at the present day, almost the only vitality to the ecclesiastical system established in the island. Their religious character has almost entirely evaporated, though the forms remain. The "solemn meetings," instead of merely ending in innocent merriment, have degenerated into scenes of riot, and often of bloodshed.

I was informed by the same person who made the remark that the festas were the main prop of the priesthood in Sardinia — and a more competent observer could not be found — that, from his own observation, men of the most sober habits of life lost all command of themselves, became absolutely frantic when tempted by the force of example, and led by what may be called an instinctive national passion to participate in these religious orgies. And Captain Smyth, R.N., who gives an interesting

account of one of these feasts, at which he was present*, after mentioning that "prayers, dances, poems, dinner, and supper concluded [occupied] the day," remarks, "that the feast of Santa Maria di Arsachena has seldom been celebrated without the sacrifice of three or four lives. "The year preceding my visit," he states, "two of the carabiniere reale had been killed; and I was shown a young man who, on the same occasion, received a ball through the breast, but having thus satisfied his foe according to the Sarde code of honour, and fortunately recovering, was, with his wife and a beautiful child, now enjoying the gaieties of the day."

Captain Smyth adds: — "I could not learn why there were no carabineers in attendance on this anniversary; but the consequence was a numerous concourse of banditti from the circumjacent fastnesses, notwithstanding the presence of a great many 'barancelli,'† who, it is known, will not arrest a man that is only an assassin."

The themes suggested by wayside objects have led us away from our track, and we have still a long and rugged road to Tempio. We shall be in the saddle for hours after sunset. Let us devote another chapter to the continuation of our journey.

* *Sketch of the Present State of the Island of Sardinia*, pp. 187—191 (1827). It is but fair to remark, that Captain (now Admiral) Smyth does not describe any excesses in the festivities he witnessed. We have reason, however, to believe that they have sadly deteriorated, as well as the religious instincts of the Sardes, in the thirty years since they came under Captain Smyth's observation.

† The "barancelli" will be noticed hereafter.

CHAP. XXVII.

The Valley narrows. — Romantic Glen. — Al fresco Meal. — Forest of Cork Trees. — Salvator Rosa Scenery. — Haunts of Outlaws. — Their Atrocities. — Anecdotes of them in a better Spirit. — The Defile in the Mountains. — Elevated Plateau. — A Night March. — Arrival at Tempio, the Capital of Gallura. — Our Reception.

AFTER following the course of the Liscia for about an hour, we struck up a lateral valley, the water of which stood in pools, separated by pebbly shallows, but overhung by drooping willows, and fringed with a luxuriant growth of ferns and rank weeds. The hills were covered with dense woods, intersected by rare clearings and inclosures on their slopes. Here and there stood a solitary *stazza*, as the stations or homesteads of the few resident farmers are here called. We observed that they were generally fixed on rising ground. At some of these the courier stopped, his errands consisting not in the delivery of letters, that office appearing to be a sinecure in this wild track, but in leaving packets of coffee, sugar, &c., and, in one instance, a cotton dress, — commodities none of which had probably been taxed to the Customs at La Madelena.

The valley narrowed, and its water quickened into a lively trout stream, gurgling over a rocky bed, bordered on one side by thick underwood, feathering down to its edge. The myrtles here were thirty feet high, and, blended with the tall heath (Erica arborea), the branching arbutus, the cistus, lentiscus, with scores of other shrubs, formed thickets of as exquisite beauty as any we had seen in Corsica. The stream on its hither bank washed a narrow margin of grass beneath the woods. Here we rested our horses and dined. Wayfarers in such countries generally select the right spot for their halt. This was a delightful one, and we fared well enough on the contents of a basket provided at La Madelena. Such rough *al fresco* meals, the uncertainty when you will get another, even when and where your ride will end, the living in the present, with fresh air and sunshine, and perpetual though gradual change of scene, with the absence of all care about the future — these form the charms of such travelling as ours.

Again in the saddle, we soon afterwards entered a forest of magnificent cork trees, festooned with wild vines, relieving the sombre tints of the forest by the bright colours of their fading leaves. It hung on a mountain's side, and the gloomy depth of shade became deeper and deeper, as, after a while, the dusk of evening came on, and we began to thread the gorges which led to the summit of the pass.

Salvator Rosa himself might have studied the wild scenery of Sardinia to advantage. If I recollect right, we are informed that he did. Nor would it require much effort of the imagination to add life to the picture in forms

suited to its savage aspect, — to conjure up the grim bandit bursting from the thickets on his prey, or lurking behind the rock for the hour of vengeance on his enemy. Such scenes are by no means imaginary.

A SALVATOR ROSA SCENE.

Even now, numbers of the *fuorusciti* find shelter in the fastnesses of the Gallura; the remnant of bands once so formidable that they spread terror through the whole province, bidding defiance alike to the law and the sword. Only within the present century the government has succeeded in quelling their ferocity, but not without desperate resistance to the troops employed, eighty of whom were destroyed by a party of the bandits in a single attack.

Still, though a better spirit begins to prevail, and outrages have become less common and flagrant, we found, in travelling through the island, a prevailing sense of

insecurity quite incompatible with our ideas of the supremacy of law under a well-ordered government. Some of the mountainous districts were in so disturbed a state that we were cautioned not to approach them; and every one we met throughout our journey was armed to the teeth.

For ourselves, we felt no apprehensions, and took no precautions. In the first place, we were not to be easily frightened by possible dangers; and, in the second, we knew that a peaceable guise, in the character of foreign travellers, was our best protection. The violences of the *fuorusciti* are, it is well understood, mingled and tempered with a strong sense of honour. I imagine, indeed, that they originate for the most part in that principle, developed in *vendetta*, though degenerating into rapine and robbery. Outlaws must find means of subsistence as well as honest men, and are not likely to be very scrupulous as to the mode of obtaining them. Among such characters there will be miscreants capable of any crime, and therefore there is always danger. But, still, the virtue of hospitality to strangers, so inherent amongst the Sardes, as in most semi-barbarous races, is not extinguished in hearts which are hardened against every other feeling of humanity. As the stranger is secure when he has "eaten salt" in the tent of the Bedouin, the Caffre's kraal, or the wigwam of the Red Indian, so there are numerous instances of the Sarde outlaws having afforded shelter and assistance to strangers throwing themselves on their honour and hospitality. Mr. Warre Tyndale relates such an adventure by a friend of his. We will venture to give the details.

"In passing over the mountains from Tempio to Longone he fell in with five or six *fuorusciti*, who, after the usual questions, finding that he was a stranger in the

country, offered to escort him a few miles on his road, for 'security.' According to his story of the occurrence, he could not at all comprehend the meaning of their expression; for the fact of finding himself completely at the mercy of six men, any one of whom might, could, or would in an instant have deprived him of life, gave him very different ideas as to the meaning of the word. In thanking them for their offer he elicited their interpretation of the phrase, and was not a little amused and comforted by their assurance that the proffered security consisted in delivering him safely into the hands of the very party with whom they were waging deadly warfare. '*Incidit in Scyllam qui vult vitare Charybdim*,' thought my friend; but having no alternative he accepted their offer, and, after partaking of an excellent breakfast with them, they all proceeded onwards. For three hours they continued their slow and cautious march through defiles to which he was a perfect stranger; and while in conversation with them on matters totally unconnected with the dangers of the place, they made a sudden and simultaneous halt. Closing in together, a whispering conference ensued among them, and as my friend was excluded from it, he began to suspect he had been ensnared by the offer of escort, and that the fatal moment had arrived when he was to fall their dupe and victim. His suspicions were increased by seeing one of the party ride forward, and leave his companions in still closer confabulation; but the suspense, though painful, was short, for in a few minutes the envoy returned, and an explanation of their mysterious halt and secrecy took place. It appeared that the keen eyes and ears of his friends had perceived their foes, who were concealed in the adjoining wood, and that, having halted, one

of them had gone as ambassador with a flag of truce and negotiated an armistice for his safe escort. My friend parted from his first guard of banditti with all their blessings on his head, and having traversed a space of neutral ground, was received by the second with no less kindness, and treated with no less honourable protection. They accompanied him till he was safely out of their district, assuring him that his accidental arrival and demand on their mutual honour and hospitality did not at all interfere with their dispute and revenge; and that if they were to meet each other the day after they had discharged the duty of safely escorting him, they would not be deterred by what had happened from instantaneously shedding each others' blood.

"This scene," adds Mr. Warre Tyndale*, "took place in the forest of Cinque-Denti, or 'five-teeth,' a tract of several miles in extent, said to contain upwards of 100,000,000 trees and shrubs, principally oak, ilex, and cork, with an underwood of arbutus and lentiscus; and such is the thickness of the foliage, that the sunbeams and the foot of man are said never to have entered many parts of it."

Another instance of the honourable feeling and forbearance hospitably shown by the Sarde mountaineer outlaws, under circumstances of great temptation to plunder, was related to me by a friend long resident in the island, as having occurred in his own experience.

Not many years ago, he was passing through the wild district in the defiles of which we have just described ourselves as being engaged. My friend had a considerable sum of money in his possession, more, he remarked, than he

* Mr. Warre Tyndale's *Island of Sardinia*, vol. i. p. 313, &c.

should have liked to lose. "*Cantabit vacuus coram latrone viator*"—"A traveller who meets robbers with his purse empty may hope to escape scot free." That was not my friend's case when he fell in with a party of outlaws armed to the teeth. The rencontre was not very pleasant, but putting the best face on it, he replied to their inquiries "whither he was bent," that he was in search of *them;* knowing that they were in the neighbourhood, and would give him shelter, as night was approaching, and on the morrow put him on his way, which he had lost. This appeal to their best feelings had the desired effect. Pleased with my friend's assurance of the confidence he placed in them, the outlaws conducted him to their place of refuge, treated him with the best they had, and, next morning, escorted him to the high-road, where they parted from him with good wishes for the prosecution of his journey. "These men must have known," said my friend, "from the weight of my valise, which they handled, that I had a large sum of money with me. It was no less than 600*l.*" The weight of such an amount of *scudi* could not have escaped their notice.

Pages might be filled with tales of the secret assassinations and wholesale butcheries perpetrated, at no very distant period, by the *malviventi* who swarmed in the woods and mountains of Sardinia; of deadly feuds in which families, and sometimes whole villages, were involved with an implacable thirst for revenge; of places sacked, and of travellers murdered and plundered in lone defiles. Some instances of a generous sympathy for adversaries in distress, and more of a gallantry displayed by some of the bandits which would have graced a better cause, might serve to relieve the dark shades of these pictures. But

enough of this kind has found a place in our chapters on Corsica. I prefer relating a story which may leave on the mind pleasing recollections of the Robin Hoods of the Sardinian wilds. My friend, lately mentioned, who is universally esteemed and respected by all classes of the Sardes throughout the island, has been thrown by circumstances into communication with the better sort of outlaws, and occasionally been the medium of communication between them and the Sardinian authorities, to their mutual advantage. He has thus acquired considerable influence over those unhappy men, enjoying their full confidence, without which the circumstances I am about to relate could not have occurred.

It appeared that, not very long since, my friend had kindly undertaken to conduct an English party from La Madelena to Tempio, the same route on which we are now engaged. The party consisted of an officer and his lady, and I believe some others. The lady was fond of sketching; attractive subjects, we know, are not wanting, and the indulgence of her taste caused frequent delays on the road, notwithstanding my friend's repeated warnings of the ill repute in which that district was held in consequence of its proximity to the haunts of the banditti. Of all things the tourists would have rejoiced to have seen a real bandit, but, probably, under any other circumstances than in a wild pass of the Gallura mountains. So when the shades of night were closing in, as they do very soon after sunset in southern latitudes, and the party became apprehensive that they should be benighted in those dreary solitudes, there was considerable alarm: — what was to be done?

My friend, having politely suggested that he had not been remiss in pointing out the consequences of delay,

replied that they must make for shelter in some *stazza*, which they might possibly reach. Accordingly he led the way by a rough track through dusky thickets, and after pursuing it for some time, great was the joy of his companions at discovering a house, where they were received with great hospitality, and the promise of all the comforts a mountain farm could offer.

The ladies had thrown aside their travelling equipments, the table was spread, and, congratulating themselves on having found such an asylum, the party sat down to supper, in all the hilarity which their escape from the perils and inconveniences of a night spent in the forest was calculated to promote. The occurrence was regarded as one of those unexpected adventures which give a zest to rough travelling.

While, however, their gaiety was at the highest, it was interrupted by loud knocking at the house door, and hoarse voices were heard without, demanding immediate admittance. A short consultation took place between my friend and their host, who agreed that no resistance could be offered, that the door should be opened, and they must all submit to their fate. Then the banditti rushed in with fierce gestures; truculent men, with shaggy hair and beards, wrapped in dark *capotes*, with long guns in their hands, and daggers in their belts and bosoms. "Spare our lives, and take our money, and all that we have," was the cry of some of the travellers. Nor were the bandits slow in falling upon the *sacs* and *malles*, and beginning to rummage their contents, without, however, offering the slightest molestation to any of the party, who stood aghast witnessing their movements.

So far from it, suddenly, as if by a concerted signal, the

outlaws, relinquishing their booty, threw off their dark mantles, disclosing all the bravery of the picturesque costume of Gallurese mountaineers, and grouping themselves round the table, leaned on the slender barrels of their fusils with a proud expression of countenance which seemed to say: — "We are outlaws, indeed; but we hold sacred the laws of hospitality and honour."

The travellers found that they were safe, and, recovering from their panic, finished their supper with renewed gaiety. The outlaws withdrew, but shortly returning, some of them accompanied by their wives and children *en habits de fête*, the evening was spent in the exhibition of national dances, with songs and merriment.

This formed the concluding scene in the little drama which my informant had got up for the gratification of his friends. Travellers might naturally wish to see specimens of a race so unique and so celebrated as the Corsican and Sardinian bandits, if they could do so with impunity, just as they would a lion or a tiger uncaged and in his native woods, from a safe point of view. My informant was able to gratify his friends at the expense of a temporary fright. Perhaps they might have been better pleased if the "*Deus ex machinâ*" had not appeared to disclose the plot, and they had been suffered to consider the happy *dénouement* as the natural result of the outlaws' magnanimity. Such, by all accounts, it might have been.

But I can assure my readers that it requires a stout heart, and a strong faith in what one has heard of the redeeming qualities in the outlaws' character, to meet them in the open field without shuddering. It was in the dusk of early morning, that, soon after leaving a village

on the borders of the Campidano, where we had passed the night, we suddenly fell in with a party of ten or twelve of these men, who crossed our track making for the hills. They were mounted on small-sized horses, stepping lightly under the great weight they carried; for the bandits were stalwart men, and heavily accoutred. Their guns were, variously, slung behind them, held upright on the thigh, or carried across the saddle-bows; short daggers were stuck in each belt, and a longer one hung by the side; a large powder-horn was suspended under the arm. Saddles *en pique*, with sheepskin housings, and leathern pouches attached on both sides, supplying the place of knapsack and haversack, completed the equipment. The "cabbanu," a cloak of coarse brown cloth, hung negligently from the shoulders, and underneath appeared the tight-fitting pelisse or vest of leather; and the loose white linen drawers, which give the Sardes a Moorish appearance, were gathered below the knee underneath a long black gaiter tightly buckled.

Already familiar with the garb and equipments of a Sarde mountaineer, these details were caught at a glance. The gaze was riveted on the features of these desperate men, — the keen black eyes flashing from their swarthy countenances, to which a profusion of hair, falling on the shoulders from beneath the dark *berette*, gave, with their bushy beards, a ferocious aspect; — and, above all, the resolute but melancholy cast of features which expressed so well their lot of daring — and despair.

Whether the party was bent on a plundering raid, or returning from some terrible act of midnight murder, there was nothing to indicate; but the impression was that they were the men "to do or die" in whatever enter-

prise they were engaged. The party kept well together, riding in single file with almost military precision. Their pace was steady, with no appearance of haste, though they must probably have been aware that some carabineers were stationed in the place hard by, which we had just left. It was a startling apparition, — these "children of the mist" — sweeping by us in grim cavalcade over a wild heath, in the cold grey dawn of a November day, every hand stained with blood, every bosom steeled to vengeance. They took no notice of us, though we passed them closely, not even exchanging salutations with our *cavallante*. We gazed on them till they were out of sight.

No such thoughts as those suggested by the occurrences just related occupied our minds while we ascended the defile which penetrates the mountain chain intervening between Tempio and the valleys terminating on the coast. The savage character and the traditions of the locality might have inspired them, but we were under the protection of the courier, a privileged person — probably for good reasons, — and, besides this, as I have already said, under no sort of personal apprehension. Our attention was divided between the stern magnificence of the gorge, the more striking from its being now half veiled in darkness, and the difficulties of the ascent which, as usual, increased step by step, until, at last, winding stairs cut in the rock surmounted the highest cliffs and landed us at the summit of the pass.

On emerging from the gloomy defile, there was a total change of scene. We found ourselves on open downs, apparently of great extent, with a flood of light shed over them by a bright moon, and two brilliant planets in the south-west, pointing like beacon lights to the position of

Tempio. An easy descent of the sloping downs brought us to the level of a vast elevated plateau, extending, with slight undulations, and broken by only one rocky ridge, to the vicinity of the town. When at the summit of the pass, we had still eight or ten miles to accomplish. Late as it was, the ride would have been highly enjoyable, in that pure atmosphere, with the vault of heaven blazing overhead, and the stillness of the night broken only by our horses' hoofs, but for the weariness of the poor beasts after a long day's journey and the toilsome ascent of a mountain pass, and the ruggedness of the tracks along which we had to pick our way.

Welcome, therefore, were the lights of Agius, Luras, and Nuches, villages standing some little way out of the road, at from two to three miles' distance from Tempio. These places, Agius in particular, were formerly notorious for robbery and vendetta, notwithstanding which the population, which is chiefly pastoral, has always maintained a high character for kindness, hospitality, industry, and temperance.

Our path lay now through very narrow lanes, dividing vineyards and gardens, extending all the way to Tempio. The replies of the courier to our inquiries after a hotel had left a complete blank in our prospects of bed, board, and lodging at the end of our journey. For travellers, such as ourselves, there was no accommodation. Tempio was rarely visited by strangers. This looked serious, after a mountain ride of nearly thirty miles, and between nine and ten o'clock at night; — what was to be done? We had letters of introduction to persons of the highest distinction in the place, but they hardly warranted our intruding ourselves on them, hungry, travel-stained, and houseless, at that late hour. The case, however, being

desperate we decided, at last, on presenting ourselves to the Commandant of the garrison, as the most likely person to give or procure us quarters.

The horses' feet clattered sharply on the *pavé* in the stillness of the narrow deserted streets; and the huge granite-built houses overhanging them, gloomy at all hours, appeared doubly inhospitable now that all lights were extinguished, the doors closed, and none ready to be opened at the call of weary travellers. Thus we traversed the whole city, the Commandant's mansion lying at the furthest extremity. Our tramp roused to attention a drowsy sentry at the gate; there were lights *à la prima*— the family then had not retired for the night. The strange arrival is announced, and our *viandante* makes no scruple of depositing our baggage in the hall. The Commandant receives us with politeness, regrets that he is so straitened in his quarters that he cannot offer us beds, and sends an orderly who procures us a lodging, meanwhile giving us coffee. Attended by two soldiers, carrying our baggage, we retrace our steps to the centre of the town, and take possession of very sorry apartments, the best portion of a gaunt filthy house. We are installed by the mistress, a shrewish person, who, making pretensions to gentility, receives her guests under protest that she does not keep a hotel, but is willing to accommodate strangers, —a phrase repeated a hundred times while we were under her roof, and emphatically when presenting a rather unconscionable bill on our departure. And this was the only refuge in a city of from six to eight thousand inhabitants, many of them boasting nobility, the capital of a province, the seat of a governor and a bishop, and headquarters of a military district. I may be pardoned for

being circumstantial in details giving an idea of what travelling in Sardinia is. Things are much the same throughout the island. The tourist who sets foot on it must be steeled against brigands, vermin, *intempérie*, and indifferent fare. "*Per aspera tendens*" would be his suitable motto. He must be prepared to rough it.

CHAP. XXVIII.

Tempio.—The Town and Environs.—The Limbara Mountains. —Vineyards.—The Governor or Intendente of the Province. —Deadly Feuds.—Sarde Girls at the Fountains.—Hunting in Sardinia. — Singular Conference with the Tempiese Hunters.—Society at the Casino.—Description of a Boar Hunt.

UNPROPITIOUS as first appearances were, we found no want of real hospitality and kindness among the Tempiese, and I have seldom spent a few days more pleasantly in a provincial town. Daylight, indeed, failed to improve the internal aspect of the place, but rather disclosed the filth of the narrow streets, without entirely dissipating the gloom shed upon them from the dusky granite of which the buildings are constructed, and the heavy wooden balconies protruding over the thoroughfares. The houses have, however, a substantial air, some of them are stuccoed, and Tempio can even boast its palaces of an ancient nobility, with coats of arms sculptured in white marble over the entrances. It possesses not less than thirteen churches, of which the collegiate and cathedral church of St. Peter is the only one worth notice,—a large and lofty building of a mixture of styles, with some tawdry ornaments, but a handsome high altar and well carved oak stalls in the choir. The foundation consists of a dean

and twelve canons, with eighteen other inferior clergy. Since 1839 it has ranked as a cathedral, Tempio having been erected into a see united with those of Cività and Ampurias, and the bishop residing here six months of the year. There is a massive old nunnery, now, I believe, suppressed, in the centre of the place, and outside the town a reformatory for the confinement of criminals sentenced to secondary punishment, a large building with a handsome elevation.

A finer position for a large city, of greater importance than Tempio, can scarcely be imagined. Placed on a gentle swell of the wide undulating plain already mentioned—the Gemini plain,—a plateau of nearly 2000 feet above the level of the sea, it stands midway between two grand mountain ranges, the Limbara stretching the bold outlines of its massive forms in a course south of the town, its summit rising to 4396 feet; and, to the north-east, a chain not quite so elevated, but of an equally wild and irregular formation, and presenting to the eye, when viewed from Tempio, even a more rugged and serrated ridge. The defiles of this chain we passed in approaching Tempio; those of the Limbara were to be penetrated in our progress southward.

Its high situation and exposure render Tempio healthy, and it is even said to be cold in winter, of which we found no symptoms in the month of November, when Limbara is supposed to assume its diadem of snow, retaining it till April.

I hardly recollect anything finer of its kind than the panoramic view of the country between Tempio and the mountains on either side, as seen from its terraces. It combines great breadth, striking contrasts, and a most

harmonious blending of colour. For a wide circuit round the town, gardens, orchards, vineyards, and a variety of small inclosures, occupying the slopes and hollows of the undulating surface, and well massed, give an idea of fertility one should not expect at this elevation. Here and there, a single round-topped pine, or a group of such pines, crowns a knoll, and breaks the flowing outlines. The open pastoral country beyond is linked to this cultivated zone by detached masses of copse and woods of cork and ilex, extending to the base of the mountains.

The Tempiese are a hardy and industrious people, exhibiting their spirit of activity in the careful cultivation about the town and the occupations of vast numbers of the population as shepherds, *cavallanti*, or *viandanti*. The dull town also shows some signs of life by a considerable trade in the country produce of cheese, fruits, hams, bacon, &c. They manufacture here the best guns in Sardinia, and know how to use them; being capital sportsmen, *cacciatori*, as well as formidable enemies in the vindictive feuds for which they have been celebrated, and not yet entirely extinct. A short time ago, two factions fought in the streets, and, though the bloody strife was quelled, they are said still to eye each other askance. Returning one night from the Casino, in company of the Commandant, he stopped on the piazza in front of the cathedral and related to us the circumstances of an assassination perpetrated a short time before on the very steps of the church.

The office of viceroy of Sardinia having been abolished, each of the eleven provinces into which the island is divided, the principal being Cagliari, Oristano, Sassari, and Tempio including the whole of Gallura, is administered by an

Intendente, who communicates directly with the Ministers at Turin. The military districts correspond with the civil divisions of the island. We found two companies of the line, and a squad of *carabinieri*, mounted gendarmes, stationed at Tempio. Sardinia returns twenty-four members to the national parliament at Turin. The ecclesiastical jurisdiction is administered by three archbishops, filling the sees of Cagliari, Sassari, and Oristano, and eight bishops, seated in the other principal cities.

High official appointments at Tempio are not very enviable posts; governors and commandants not being exempt from the summary vengeance, for real or supposed wrongs, at which the Sardes are so apt. The Commandant told us that his immediate predecessor had received one of the death-warnings which precede the fatal stroke: I believe he was soon afterwards removed. For himself, his successor said, he took no precautions, did his duty, and braved the consequences. A few years before, the Governor, having compromised himself by acts of injustice, was assassinated, after receiving one of these "death-warnings" peculiar to Sardinia. "During the night he heard a pane of glass crack, and on examining it in the morning he found the fatal bullet on the floor. The custom of the country is that, whenever the *vendetta alla morte*, revenge even to death, is to be carried out, the party avenging himself shall give his adversary timely notice by throwing a bullet into his window, in order that he may either make immediate compensation for the injury or prepare himself for death. The Governor for some time used every caution as to when and where he went, but at length disregarded the warning, imagining he was safe. The assassin, however, had watched him with an eagle's eye,

and he fell in a moment he least expected. Report further says," observes Mr. Tyndale, in whose words we relate the occurrence, "that he is not the only Governor of Gallura to whom this summary mode of obtaining justice, or inflicting vengeance, has been intimated."

The present Intendente of Tempio, the Marchese Clavarino, though he only entered on his office in the month of April before our visit, had already done much by his firm and enlightened administration to restore order and confidence. He had been able to collect the arrears of taxes, and, by impartial justice between all factions, had removed every pretence for a resort to deeds of violence for the redress of injuries.

"The Governor's palace, establishment, and retinue," observes Mr. Tyndale, "consist of three rooms on a second story, a female servant, and a sentry at the door." Things were little changed in 1853, but, in the absence of all state, we were impressed on our first visit of ceremony that the government of a turbulent province could not have been intrusted to better hands. In the antechamber we found a priest waiting, as it struck me from his deportment, to prefer his suit with "bated breath," and the feeling that the wings of the priesthood are now clipped in the Sardinian states. The Marquis conversed with frankness on his own position and the state of the island. He had been in London at the time of the "Great Exhibition," and his views of the English alliance, and of politics generally, were just such as might be expected from an enlightened Sardinian. A worthy coadjutor to such statesmen as D'Azeglio and Cavour, I would venture to predict that the Intendente of Tempio will ere long be called to fill a higher post.

Our rambles in the environs of Tempio were very pleasant. It was the season of the vintage, late here; and great numbers of the people were busily employed in the vineyards and the "lodges"* attached to them. Observing smoke issuing from most of these, we learned, in answer to our inquiries, that a portion of boiled lees is added in the manufacture of wine, to insure its keeping, the grapes not sufficiently ripening in consequence of the coldness of the climate. We found no such fault with those we tasted. A very considerable extent of surface is planted with vines, divided, however, into small vineyards. At the entrance of each stands an arched gateway, generally a solid structure of granite, with more or less architectural pretensions, and a date and initials carved in stone, commemorative, no doubt, of the planting of so cherished a family inheritance. One of these is represented in the foreground of the accompanying plate.

There are several fountains in the neighbourhood of Tempio, the waters of which are deliciously cool and pure. One of them, on the road beyond the Commandant's house, gushes out of the rock, under shade of some fine Babylonian willows. Sheltered by these in the heat of noon, and in still greater numbers at eventide, one saw the damsels of Tempio resort with their pitchers, as in ancient times Abraham's steward, in his journey to Mesopotamia, stood at the well of Nahor, when the daughters of the men of the city came out with their pitchers†; as Saul, passing through Mount Ephraim and ascending the hill of Zuph, met the maidens going out to draw water‡; or as the

* Cf. Isaiah, i. 8.: "A lodge in a vineyard, and a cottage in a garden of cucumbers."

† Gen. xxiv. 11, 15.

‡ 1 Sam. ix. 11.

spies of Ulysses fell in with the daughter of Antiphates at the well of Artacia.* Sardinia abounds with such mementos of primitive times.

The Tempiese women have the singular habit of raising the hinder part of the upper petticoat, the *suncurinu*, when they go abroad, and bringing it over the head and shoulders, so as to form a sort of hood. So far from this fashion giving them, as might be supposed, a *dowdy* appearance, it is not inelegant when the garment is gracefully arranged. It has generally broad stripes, and is often of silk or a fine material. The under-petticoat, of cloth, is either of a bright colour, or dark with a bright-coloured border. Both of them are worn very full. The jacket is of scarlet, blue, or green velvet, fitting very tightly to the figure, the edges having a border of a different colour, and sometimes brocaded. The simple head-dress consists of a gaily-coloured kerchief wound round the head, and tied in knots before and behind.

We expected to get some shooting in the woods at the foot of the Limbara, as they abound with wild hogs, *cingale*, and deer, *capreoli*, a sort of roebuck. Our letters of introduction to some gentlemen of Tempio failed of assisting us. They were from home, probably engaged in the vintage. But the Sardes of all ranks are determined sportsmen, *cacciatori*, and we did not despair, though hunting excursions in the island require, as we shall find, a certain organisation. In our dilemma we made the acquaintance—of all people in the world—of a little barber, who appeared deeply versed in the politics of the place, and undertook to arrange the desired *chasse* with the Tempiese hunters. We were to meet him the same evening, at

* Odyss. lib. x.

a low *caffè*, where he was to introduce us to the leaders of the band. A singular conference it was, that meeting of ourselves, men of the north, with the wild *chasseurs* of the Gallura, between whom there was nothing in common but enthusiastic love of the field and the mountain.

The low vault of the *Caffè de la Costituzione* was lighted by a single lamp, by whose glimmerings we dimly discerned, amidst wreaths of tobacco-smoke, the grim features of the men with whom we had to do. They were honest enough, no doubt, according to Sarde notions of honour, and received us with great cordiality; but the consultation between themselves was carried on in a patois qûite unintelligible, except that we gathered that there were some difficulties in the way.

La caccia di cingale, a boar-hunt in Sardinia, requires a number of hunters, besides those who beat the woods to rouse the game; and, whether there were any feuds to be stifled, any jealousies to be allayed, which, with armed men in that state of society, might endanger the peace, the difficulties appeared serious. Whatever they were, our *Barbière di Seviglia*, who, to use a familiar phrase, seemed up to everything, and conducted the treaty on our part, did not think proper to disclose them. One thing, however, we soon learned, that the services of these men were not to be hired; their ruling passion for the chase and the national principle of hospitality were incentives enough to the proposed expedition. We were also informed that there were other parties to be consulted, and the meeting was adjourned to the following day.

Very different was the scene at the Casino to which we were introduced by the Commandant shortly after our consultation with the hunters. At the Casino there is a

réunion of the best society in Tempio every evening. We found good rooms, well lighted, with coffee and refreshments nicely served. There were newspapers, and a small collection of books, — the standard works of Italian writers, with some French. The society was unexpectedly good for such a place as Tempio, consisting, besides the officers of the garrison, of many of the resident nobles and gentry. We spent some pleasant hours there, finding among the members well-informed and intelligent persons. Politics were freely discussed, liberal opinions prevailing even to the degree of such ultra-liberalism as might have better suited the class of persons we met at the *Caffè de la Costituzione*, if politics are discussed there also. No doubt they are, the Tempiese, like the rest of the islanders, being a shrewd race, devotedly patriotic, and jealous of their independence.

We could not, as already hinted, reckon Madame Rosalie's *ménage* among the pleasant things that reconciled us to a longer stay than we intended in the rude capital of Gallura; but, at least, she supplied us in her own person with a fund of amusement. My companion, who had the happy gift for a traveller of being almost omnivorous, used to laugh heartily at my vain attempts to extract something edible from the meagre *carte* offered by Madame. Her replies parrying my demands, and uttered with amazing volubility, in shrill tones and a patois almost unintelligible, invariably ended to this effect :—" Signore, my house is not a locanda, though I have opened my doors to accommodate you." It was a species of hospitality that cost us dear. Madame's airs of gentility, though very amusing, were of course treated with due respect. But what gave zest to my friend's mirth, and,

with the hopeless prospect of dinner, produced in me a slight irritation, sometimes, perhaps, ill concealed, was Madame Rosalie's evolutions on these occasions. I fancy, now, that I see her slight figure skipping into the room, dancing a jig round the table, never at rest, screeching all the while at the highest pitch of her voice, with every limb in motion, as if she had St. Vitus's dance, or, as they say, went on wires. I can only compare the play of her limbs to that of one of those children's puppets of which all the limbs — head, legs, and arms — are set in motion by pulling a string.

Nothing detained us at Tempio but the proposed boar-hunt. We attended a second meeting of the principal hunters, committing ourselves unreservedly to their disposal, and, after some further consultation, among themselves, our little barber had the glory of bringing the negociations to a successful issue. All the difficulties, whatever they were, had been removed, and it was settled that the affair should come off on the morrow.

Accordingly, at an early hour, there was an unusual stir in the dull streets of Tempio, snapping of guns, trampling of horses, and barking of dogs. On our joining the party at the rendezvous in front of the *caffè*, we found some twenty horsemen, carrying guns, — rough and ready fellows, looking as if a dash into the forest, whether against hogs or gendarmes, would equally suit them. We were followed by a rabble on foot, attended by dogs of a variety of species, some of them strong and fierce. After winding through the narrow lanes among the vineyards, our cavalcade was joined by one of the gentlemen on whom we had called with a letter of introduction, and his son, who mixed freely with our rank and file. There is a

happy fellowship in field sports which, to a great degree, levels for the time distinctions of rank; and this we found particularly in Sardinia, where all classes are so devoted to these sports, and they are of a character requiring extended and rather promiscuous operations.

Our irregular cavalry shaped their march in broken order towards a spur of the mountains, covered with dense thickets, at the foot of the Punta Balestiere, the highest point of the Limbara. After clearing the inclosures our track led us over the wide undulating plain already described, interspersed with scattered thickets, but with few signs of cultivation. On approaching the mountains there were indications giving promise of sport in patches of soil grubbed up by the wild hogs in search for the root of the Asphodel, which they greedily devour. This handsome plant springs from a bunch of long fibrous bulbs, something like the Dahlia, throwing up straight stems two or three feet high, with numerous angular filiformed leaves and yellow flowers.* It grows freely on all the wastes throughout the island. The root contains so large a portion of saccharine matter, and is so plentiful, that while we were in Sardinia a Frenchman was forming a company for distilling alcohol from it on an extensive scale. A distillery was to be established at Sassari, with moveable stills throughout the island, wherever the bulbs could be

* Asphodels were planted by the ancients near burying-places, in order to supply the manes of the dead with nourishment.

> "By those happy souls that dwell
> In yellow meads of Asphodel."—*Pope.*

The plant *lilio asphodelus* belongs to the liliaceous tribe. It flourishes also in Italy, Sicily, Crete, and Africa, some varieties bearing white flowers.

most easily procured. The projector gave us a sample-bottle of the alcohol, a strong and purely tasteless spirit. I heard afterwards that the speculation did not succeed. There is fine feeding for the wild hogs, in season, on the acorns of the vast cork and other oak woods in the interior of the island, where we afterwards hunted them. They commit great ravages in the cultivated grounds. One was shot in the vineyards skirting the town during our stay at Tempio.

Approaching the mountains we threw off our attendants on foot, with their mongrel pack, whose business it was to scale the wooded ridge from behind, and beat the thickets for the game. The rest of our party soon afterwards struck up a valley parallel with the ridge, and facing the mountain side, which rose above it a vast amphitheatre of hanging woods, shelving and precipitous cliffs, rocks and pinnacles, — so glorious a spectacle that it riveted my attention, and almost drew it off from the work before us. But now our leaders proceeded to "tell off" the party, stationing them singly at distances of about seventy or eighty paces along the bottom of the valley, within gunshot of the verge of the wood, which sloped to it. In this open order the line extended more than half a mile. The horses were tethered in the rear.

It was my lot to be posted near the extreme right on a detached rock, slightly elevated, so as to command the ground. I could just distinguish my neighbours on either hand, "low down in the broom," the valley being rather thickly covered with brakes of underwood. The instructions for my noviciate in boar-hunting were,—not to quit my post, and to maintain strict silence; injunctions not likely to be disregarded, as a breach of the former might

have exposed me to be winged, in mistake for a pig among the rustling bushes, considering that there were dead shots on either flank, with two or three balls in their barrels. As to the other word of order, silence, the injunction was needless, for the ear of my nearest neighbour could only have been reached by shouts which might scare the game, and prevent their breaking cover, and that I was not quite novice enough to risk.

So I sat down on the rock, with my gun across my knees, watching the play of light and shade on the mountain sides as the clouds flitted round them. But this did not last long, for the line of *vedettes* could have been scarcely formed when the shouts of the party who had now gained the heights, and were beating the woods in face of our position, summoned the hunters in the valley beneath to be on the alert. The interval of suspense and silence being now broken, the scene became very exciting. The dogs in the wood gave tongue, and the short and snapping bark was shortly followed by a full burst, which told that the game was on foot. Then, no doubt, every gun was at full cock, every eye intently watching the avenues in the thickets through which boar or deer, driven from the woods, might cross the valley. The shouts and cries sounded nearer and nearer, till at length a shot from the extreme left announced that some game had been marked as it broke cover. A dropping fire now extended at intervals along the line, as cingale or capreole burst from the thickets. Several fell to the guns of the party, some escaped; others, wounded, were pursued by the dogs to the rear of the position, with a rush of some of the hunters on their trail.

The thickets having been completely swept, the line was now broken, and the party remounting their horses bore their trophies to a woody glen, where we dined, the spot chosen being the grassy bank of a little rivulet. Arms were piled; some gathered wood and lighted fires, others fetched water from the brook, and the more handy opened the baskets of provisions we had brought from Tempio and spread them on the grass. A wild boar was cut open, and, in Homeric style, the choicest portions of the intestines were torn out, and, broiled on wooden skewers, offered to the hunting-knives of the guests. The wine cup went round, and the hunters' feast was seasoned with rude merriment.

"When they had eaten and drank enough," * the party mounted their horses and returned to Tempio, carrying the game across their saddle-bows. The cavalcade was as joyous as the feast. Jumping from their horses when they got among the vineyards, some dashed over the fences and brought away large bunches of grapes. And so we entered the city in triumph. In the course of the evening the skin of the finest wild boar was sent to our quarters as a trophy of our share in the work of the day, with a joint of the meat. Madame Rosalie's *cuisine* failed to do it justice; but, when well cooked, wild boar is excellent eating. This mode of hunting, generally practised by the Sardes, resembles the *battue* of wolves and leopards at which I have assisted in South Africa, where the Boers, assembling in numbers, make an onslaught on the ravagers of their flocks; having the dens and thickets driven, and stationing

* Αὖταρ ἐπεὶ ποσίος καὶ ἐδητύος, &c. HOMER, *passim*.

themselves on the outskirts with their long roers to shoot down the vermin as they issue forth. Such meetings are jovial, and the sport is exciting, but not to be compared, I think, to deer-stalking or fox-hunting, to say nothing of a foray against lions and tigers.

CHAP. XXIX.

Leave Tempio.—Sunrise.—Light Wreaths of Mist across the Valley.—A Pass of the Limbara.— View from the Summit. —Dense Vapour over the Plain beneath.—The Lowlands unhealthy.—The deadly Intempérie.—It recently carried off an English Traveller.—Descend a romantic Glen to the Level of the Campidano.—Its peculiar Character.—Gallop over it. —Reach Ozieri.

I HAVE reason to believe from information received during a recent visit to Sardinia that the insecurity which, to some extent, prevailed when we were in the island in 1853, had considerably lessened. But while at Tempio in that year we learnt by an official communication from Cagliari that some of the central mountain districts, through which we proposed to pass on a shooting excursion, were in a disturbed state and must be approached with caution. In consequence, the *Lascia portare arma* forwarded to us was accompanied by an open order from the Colonel commanding the royal Caribineers, addressed to all the stations, for our being furnished with an escort. So, also, on our visit of leave to the Intendente of Tempio he pressed us to allow him to send us forward under escort, though I did not learn that there had been any recent outrages in his own province. On our declining the offer, as at variance with our habits and feelings, the Intendente

said, "I assure you that, here, the lowest government employé will not travel without an escort;"—and he again urged our accepting it, adding, "the Marchese d'Azeglio having put you under my especial protection, I am responsible for your safety, and wish to use every precaution, lest anything unpleasant should occur." On our again respectfully declining the offer, the kind Intendente said, with a shrug, "Well, gentlemen, I have done my duty, and I hope that when you get to Turin you will so represent it."

Such precautions exhibit a singular state of society in the midst of European civilisation; I apprehend, however, that the Piedmontese officials, and the continentals in general, paint the Sardes in darker colours than they merit; and there is little good blood between them.

Having no such prejudices, and entertaining no apprehensions, we started, as usual, having a honest viandante, with his saddle and pack-horses, for our only escort. The sun was just rising over the serrated ridge of the eastern mountains, when, emerging from the fetid shade of the narrow streets of Tempio, we came suddenly into his blessed light. The mountain sides still formed an indistinct mass of the richest purple hue, while, over the whole plain beneath, light mists rolled in fantastic waves, floating like a mysterious gauze-like veil, shreds of which touched by the sun's rays became brilliantly coloured, and others drifting through the scattered woods had the appearance of being combed out into long and fine-spun threads like the spiders'-webs which, gemmed with dew-drops, hung from spray to spray. It was a magnificent view, of great breadth, like one of Martin's mysterious pictures, and seen under the most splendid effects; but so transitory

that after we crossed the first ridge all was changed. Meanwhile denser, but still light, wreaths close at hand mingled with the mists, as the blue smoke curled up from the vineyard sheds where the industrious Tempiese had already commenced their labours. The temperature was delicious, and rain had fallen in the night cooling the air and refreshing vegetation. Pleasanter than ever was our early ride through the pretty winding lanes dividing the vineyards and gardens skirting the town, and again, as we descended through deep banks among scattered woodlands to the open plains extending to the foot of the Limbara Mountains.

A long but easy ascent led to the top of the pass, the ridge we mounted being thickly clothed with evergreen shrubbery, the arbutus predominating, profusely decked with fruit and flower. The summit of the pass opened to us a double view in strong contrast. Looking back, we once more saw through a gap the mountains of Corsica, in faint outlines, eighty miles distant, with a glimpse of a blue stripe of water, the Straits of Bonifacio. Turning southward, we stood at the summit of a long winding glen richly wooded with ilex and cork trees, and far away beneath there lay before us a broad plain partially covered with a sea of vapour, not like the gay wreaths of mist that lightly floated over the elevated plateau surrounding Tempio, but so still, so condensed, so white, as to have been easily mistaken for a frozen lake powdered with snow, and its hills for islands rising out of the water.*

But such an image is unsuited to the climate of Sardinia at any season. Smiling as the landscape now appeared, its most striking feature was associated with the idea of death.

* See the sketch in the next page.

That dense creamy vapour, formed by the pestiferous exhalations of the lowlands, is the death shroud of the plain outstretched beneath it.

DESCENT TO THE CAMPIDANO.

During the heats of summer, nay, sometimes from April till the latter end of November, the ravages of the deadly *intempérie* extend throughout the island to such a degree that in Captain Smyth's list of nearly 350 towns and villages included in his "Statistical Table of Sardinia," full a third are noted as insalubrious. The disorder has the same character as malaria, but is far more virulent. Captain Smyth thus describes the symptoms: "The patient is first attacked by a headache and painful tension of the epigastric region, with alternate sensations of heat and chilliness; a fever ensues, the exacerbations of which are extremely severe, and are followed by a mournful debility, more or less injurious even to those accustomed

to it, but usually fatal to strangers." We have conversed with natives and residents who have recovered from repeated attacks of *intempérie;* foreigners suffer most. "Instances have been related to me," observes Captain Smyth, "of strangers landing for a few hours only from Italian coasters, who were almost immediately carried off by its virulence; indeed, the very breathing of the air by a foreigner at night, or in the cool of the evening, is considered as certain death in some parts."*

Not twelve months before our visit, an English officer was suddenly struck down and carried off while on a similar excursion in this part of the island. Sir Harry Darrell was one of the last men I should have thought liable to so fatal an attack. A few years ago, when returning from Caffreland just before the breaking out of the last war, I met him on the march to the frontier. I had off-saddled

* "That certain local causes have through all ages tainted the atmosphere of Sardinia, may be gathered from the remarks and sarcasms of a host of early authors. Martial, in mentioning the hour of death, celebrates salubrious Tibur at the expense of this pestilent isle:

'Nullo fata loco possis excludere: cum mors
Venerit, in medio Tibure Sardinia est.'

"Cicero, who hated Tigellius, the flattering musical buffoon so well described by Horace, thus lashes his country in a letter to Fabius Gallus: 'Id ego in lucris pono non ferre hominem pestilentiorem patriâ suâ.' Again, writing to his brother: 'Remember,' says he, 'though in perfect health, you are in Sardinia.' And Pausanias, Cornelius Nepos, Strabo, Tacitus, Silius Italicus, and Claudian, severally bear testimony to the current opinion. In later times the terse Dante sings:

'Qual dolor fora, se degli spedali
Di Valdichiana tra 'l luglio e 'l settembre
E di maremma, e di Sardinia i mali
Fossero in una fossa tutte insembre,' " &c.

Smyth's Sardinia, p. 81.

at noon, and while my horses were grazing, knee-haltered, on a slip of grass by the side of a running stream, was lying under the shade of a wild olive-tree, when the head-quarters' division of the —— Dragoon Guards passed along the road. Sir Harry and some other officers rode down into the meadow, and we talked of the state of Caffreland and of the principal chiefs, most of whom I had recently seen. I heard afterwards that he had got out fox-hounds and hunted the country about Fort Beaufort. He was a keen sportsman and clever artist. Some of his sketches in South Africa were published by Ackerman. His remains lie at Cagliari, where he was conveyed when struck by the *intempérie*, dying a few days after. A friend of mine, who was there at the time, informs me that Sir Harry's constitution had become debilitated, and he had rendered himself liable to the attack by exposure and over-fatigue. I mention the circumstance as a warning, but do not think there is much risk, with proper precautions, for men in good health, through most parts of the island, after the November rains have precipitated the miasma and purified the air. We ourselves slept in most pestiferous places, where the ravages of the disease were marked in the sallow countenances of the inhabitants, without experiencing the least inconvenience.

We rested at the summit of the pass commanding the distant view of the Campidano, which led to these remarks on the insalubrity of the country and the scourge of the *intempérie*. They are not, however, confined to the plains, but of course are more prevalent where marshes, stagnant waters, and rank vegetation engender vapours rising in the summer. Leaving my companion to finish the sketch copied in a former page, I slowly trotted on with the

viandante, and, the descent becoming rapid, proceeded leisurely down the wooded glen, a depth of shade in which the heat, as well as the picturesque character of the scenery, tempted to linger. Old cork and ilex trees, with their rugged bark and grey foliage, throwing out rectangular arms of stiff and fantastic growth, wild vines hanging from the branches in festoons of brilliant hues, other trees with tawny orange leaves,—I believe a species of ash,—some of a rich claret, and the never-failing arbutus, here quite a tree, with its orange and crimson berries, all these massed together formed admirable contrasts in shape and colour. And then there was the gentle brook, never roaring or boisterous, but purling among rocks dividing it into still pools, with giant ferns hanging over the stream and bunches of hassock-grass luxuriating in the alluvial soil of its little deltas, and, where the forest receded, a graceful growth of shrubbery feathering the winding banks.

Some of the cork-trees were fine specimens, of great age. Several I measured in a rough way by embracing their trunks with extended arms. This, repeated four or five times, gave a circumference of twenty or twenty-five feet. The bark was ten inches thick. While so employed I was startled by a wild boar rushing by me into the thickets. The cork wood gradually thinned into scattered clumps on the slopes of the hills, and the winding valley, five or six miles long, was abruptly terminated by a bold mamelon, or green mound, covered with dwarf heath or turf; so shorn and smooth it appeared, probably from being pastured, in immediate contrast with the shaggy sides of the mountain glen. The horsetrack, avoiding this obstacle, led up the eastern acclivity of the glen, and the summit

commanded the Campidano, now clear of fog, spread out before us, far as the eye could reach, in a broad level, broken only by some singular flat-topped hills in the foreground.

Striking and novel as this landscape appeared at the first glance, I confess that, at the moment, my attention was most directed backward on the track I had just followed. It was now some hours since I parted from my fellow-traveller. I had often listened for his horse's steps in the deep glen, where there was no seeing many hundred yards backwards or forwards; and though the present elevation commanded some points in the track, he did not appear. I was getting fidgetty, and the guide's replies to my inquiries did not tend to reassure me, for there are "*malviventi*" as well as "*fuorusciti*" in the wilds — a well known distinction — when, just as we were on the point of returning back, after half an hour's additional suspense, I got a glimpse of my friend trotting out of the woods close under the point of view. He, too, had lingered in the romantic glen after finishing his sketch.

We had now cleared the defiles of the Limbara, and, descending to the level of the plains, made up for lost time by galloping *ventre à terre* over the boundless waste. Here were no shady nooks, no forest masses, no fantastic growths, no grey crags, no bright-flowered thickets, so grouped as one might never see again, and tempting to linger. All the features were now on a broad scale; they were caught at a glance, and the few which broke the monotony of the scene were repeated again and again. But they were not without interest. The rivulet had expanded into a wide stream, making long bends through the deep loam of the grassy meads, and looking so cool

and refreshing, that, but for the pebbly shoals in its bed, it was difficult to conceive the midsummer heats rendering these verdant plains desolate and pestilential.

Along the banks of the river, and far away in every direction, were scattered herds of cattle, guarded by armed shepherds, wild bearded fellows in goatskin mantles and leather doublets, mostly on horseback. We meet such figures on the grassy track, looking fiercely as we sweep along; we see them at a distance on the edge of some of the gentle slopes in which the plain is rolled, when only the profile of the horse, the stalwart rider and his long gun, comes out clear against the sky. There is more life on the Campidano than in the mountains. Not that it is inhabited; there is scarcely a house on this whole plain, fifty or sixty miles in circumference. Not that there is much cultivation; here and there, at rare intervals, we see patches of a livelier green than the surrounding expanse of grass, and the young wheat just springing up, the strong blade and rich loamy furrow, remind us that Sardinia was reckoned in former times a granary of Rome. We see also the grey mounds of the Nuraghe scattered over the plain, some mouldering down to its level, a few still rearing their truncated cones, like solitary watch-towers, for which they have been mistaken. They, too, remind us of times long past, of a primitive age. But they are to be found in all parts of the island, and we shall fall in with them again, more at leisure to examine their structure and hazard a conjecture as to their origin. Now we gallop on over the level plain. The sward on the beaten track is close and elastic, and our cavallante's spirited barbs, spared in the glen during the noontide heat, spring as if they had never been broken to the

M.A. Biddulph Lt. Col. R.A. Del.

M & N. Hanhart, Lith. et Imp.

THE PLAIN OF OZIERI

portante pace. The morning fog and the cadaverous features of the shepherds have warned us that the teeming Campidano is no place to linger in after nightfall. Their homes are in the villages scattered round the edge of the great plain; not much elevated, as the *paese* in Corsica, but standing on gentle acclivities. We marked them at a distance. Already we have passed Sassu on our right and Oschiri on our left; they are poor places. Codriaghe and Codrongianus and Florinas stand at the extremity of the plain towards Sassari, and we shall see them on our road thither, if we ever get there. Ardara, once the capital of the province of Logudoro, founded as early as 1060, and having many historic traditions, crowns, with its massive towers rising above the ruined walls, a hillock on the plain right before us. It boasts also a fine church, enriched with curious objects of art; but the town has dwindled to a collection of hovels with a small population, few of whom, we are told, survive their fiftieth year, so destructive is the *intempérie*. We turn away: Ozieri stands invitingly on rather a bold eminence at the head of a gorge where the plain narrows towards the hills. The rays of the setting sun are full upon its houses and churches. It is a place of some importance, and lies in our proposed line through byroads to the forest districts of the interior. If our pace holds on we may reach it by an hour after sunset. Perhaps we shall find good cheer, the best preservative, I should imagine, against the miasma that produces *intempérie*.

CHAP. XXX.

Effects of vast Levels as compared with Mountain Scenery.— Sketches of Sardinian Geology.—The primitive Chains and other Formations.—Traces of extensive Volcanic action.— The "Campidani," or Plains.—Mineral Products.

VAST open plains, such as that described in the preceding chapter, form a singular feature in the physical aspect of the island of Sardinia. There are few travellers, I think, of much experience who, in traversing such tracts of country, have not been struck at one time by the desolation of their depths of solitude, or been pleased, at another, by the glimpses of nomade life, their occasional accompaniments; and who would not be willing to admit that, in their general impressions on the imagination, they sometimes rival even mountain scenery. For if grandeur be one main ingredient in the sublime, when an object such as a seemingly boundless level, or rolling plain, the extent of which the eye is unable to scan, lies before you, when, after long marches, it still appears interminable, the mind is perhaps more impressed with the idea of magnitude than by large masses, however enormous, with defined outlines presented to the view. In the former instance, the imagination is called into play and fills out the picture on a scale corresponding with the actual features, as far as

they are subject to observation; but the imagination proverbially adopts an extravagant measure.

One of my friend's sketches of Campidano scenery, introduced here, cleverly represents the effects produced by great distances on one of these rolling plains.

THE CAMPIDANO.

Perhaps the idea of illimitable extent is better conveyed by the lithographic sketch, No. 8, in which the level, not being interrupted by the intersection of a mountain ridge, as in the former, vanishes in distance. But the termination of the plain in the woodcut is only apparent as, winding round the base of the mountains, the level is still continued though lost to sight. It is not however intended to intimate that these Sardinian plains can at all vie with the great continental levels in various quarters of the globe, the immensity of which occurred to my mind, and some of them to my recollection, when remarking on the impressions such scenes produce on the traveller's sensations. The most extensive of the Sardinian Campidani is only fifty miles in length, and they are all of far less breadth. Their effect is therefore only comparative, but being proportioned to the scale of other surrounding objects, to the area of the insular surface, and the limited height and extent of the mountain ranges, they produce a pro-

portionate effect; but that, as it has been already remarked, is sufficiently striking.

Some brief details of these interesting features in Sardinian scenery—the larger of which are termed *Campidani*, and the secondary *Campi*—will be fitly combined with a general sketch of the geological formations of the island; as we are now approaching the same standing point, the central districts, from which we took occasion to review the orology of Corsica. It was then remarked that the mountain systems of the two islands are of similar character and were formerly united; of which there is evidence in the rocky islets scattered from one coast to the other, across the Straits of Bonifacio.* Sardinia, however, though apparently a continuation of Corsica, is essentially different in its physical aspect; the elevations being less, the plains more extensive and fertile, its mineralogical riches far more varied, and volcanic action on a large scale being traced throughout the island, while few vestiges of it are discovered in Corsica.

While these sheets have been passing through the press, General Alberto de la Marmora has published two volumes in continuation of his "*Voyages en Sardaigne*," devoted exclusively, with an accompanying Atlas, to the geology of the island; a work of the greatest scientific value, from the high character of the author, and the time he has zealously spent in his researches, but too elaborate for any attempt to reduce its details within the compass or the scope of these pages. Our brief sketch must be confined to a few general remarks derived from La Marmora's former volumes, and Captain Smyth's very accurate account of Sardinia;

* See before, pp. 150, 260.

availing ourselves also of Mr. Warre Tyndale's digest of these accounts, and giving some results of our own limited observation.

The principal chain of primitive mountains trends from north to south, extending through the districts of Gallura, Barbagia, Ogliastra, and Budui, along the whole eastern coast of the island. This range consists of granite, with ramifications of schist, and large masses of quartz, mica, and felspar. It is intersected by transverse ranges, and by plains and valleys partly formed by volcanic agency; indeed, the connection between the Gallura group and that of Barbagia is entirely cut off by the great plain of Ozieri.

The most northerly of the series is the Limbara group. Its highest peak, according to La Marmora 4287 feet, is an entire mass of granite. The Genargentu in the Barbagia range, of the same formation, the highest and most central mountain in Sardinia, has two culminating points of the respective heights of 6230 and 6118 feet. They are covered with snow from September till May, and the inhabitants of Aritzu, who make it an object of traffic, are, I believe, able to continue the supply throughout the year.* The

* The trade in snow is farmed by the Aritzese, it being, like that in salt and tobacco, a royal monopoly, leased for terms of years at a considerable rent. Upwards of 9000 cantars (about 375 tons) are brought down every year from the mountains of Fundada Cungiata and Genargentu, and carried on horseback to all parts of the island. The labour, fatigue, and difficulty attending the conveyance of the snow from those great altitudes are severe; as in the paths where there is no footing for a horse, the men are obliged to carry the burden on their shoulders; and the quantity they can bear is a matter of boast and rivalry among them.

It has been observed in a former chapter that none of the Sardinian

Monte Oliena in the central group near Nuoro, 4390 feet high, is calcareous, as are two others, between 2000 and 3000 feet high, in the same chain. It terminates with the Sette Fratelli, prolonged to Cape Carbonaro, the eastern point of the gulf of. Cagliari, the highest point of the group, which is entirely granite, being 3142 feet.

We find a detached formation called the Nurra mountains, composed of granite, schist, and primitive limestone, filling the isthmus of the Cape at the north-west extremity of the island, and extending to the little isle of Asinara. The mountains of Sulcis, at the extreme south-west, and terminating in the Capes Teulada and Spartivento, are similarly composed; their highest peaks, the Monte Linas and Severa, being from 3000 to 4000 feet high.

But the most striking geological feature in Sardinia consists in the great extent of the volcanic formations. These, as well as the slighter traces of such action in Corsica, are doubtless connected with the subterranean and submarine fires of which the coasts and islands of the central Mediterranean basin afford so many evidences in active and extinct volcanoes (some of them in activity in the times of Homer, Pindar, and Thucydides), and ranging in a circle from the Roman territory to that of Naples, to the Lipari islands, Sicily, and those forming the subject of

mountains rise to what would be the level of perpetual frost. The snow trade must therefore be supplied from deep hollows in the mountains, serving as natural ice-houses, in which it is lodged during the summer.

We have an account of a forest in Scotland held of the Crown by the tenure of the delivery of a snow-ball on any day of the year on which it may be demanded; and it is said that there is no danger of forfeiture for default of the quit-rent, the chasms of Benewish holding snow, in the form of a glacier, throughout the year.—*Pennant's Tour in Scotland*, i. 185.

our present inquiry. Sardinia has been widely ravaged by internal fires, but at too remote an era to admit of our conjecturing the period. The volcanic action can be traced from Castel Sardo, where it has formed precipices on the northern coast, to the vicinity of Monastir, a distance southward of more than 100 miles; its central focus appearing to have been about half-way between Ales, Milis, and St. Lussurgiu, where, as Captain Smyth remarks, "the phlægrean evidences are particularly abundant." The action was principally confined to the western side of the island, though, south of Genargentu, the volcanic formations approach the primitive chain, and the rounded hills we remarked in the present rambles, after crossing the Limbara, as far east as Oschiri on the Campo d'Ozieri, are, I doubt not, craters of extinct volcanoes. The flat-topped hill, or truncated cone, figured in the lithograph drawing, No. 8, represents one of them, and, scattered as these verdant cones are over the long sweeps of the Campidani, they formed additional features in the interest with which, as I have already said, we regarded those immense tracts.

From the supposed centre of volcanic action just suggested, it may be traced northward through the districts of Macomer, Bonorva, Giavesu, Keremule, with the hillock on which Ardara stands, and Codrongianus, to its termination in the cliffs of Lungo Sardo. But its most salient feature is the detached group of mountains on the western coast between Macomer and Orestano, which are entirely volcanic. This group has the name of "Monte del Marghine," in the small map prefixed to Captain Smyth's survey, but I do not find that or any other distinct name attached to it in La Marmora's large "Carta dell' Isola."

The village of St. Lussurgiu is literally built in a crater connected with this group, as is also that of Cuglieri. The highest point, Monte Articu, the summit of Monte Ferro, entirely volcanic, rises 3442 feet above the Mediterranean, and the Trebia Lada, 2723 feet high, is one of the three basaltic feet forming the *Trebina*, or Tripod, on the summit of Monte Arcuentu, a mountain between Orestano and Ales formed of horizontal layers of basalt. Further south at Nurri, closely approaching the primitive chain, are two hills, called "pizzè-ogheddu," and "pizzè ogu mannu," or peaks of the little and great eye, which were certainly ignivomous mouths, and the peasants believe that they still have a subterraneous communication. A volcanic stream has run from them over a calcareous tract, forming an elevated plain nearly 1600 feet above the level of the sea, called, "*Sa giara e Serri.*" It overlooks Gergei, and is covered with oaks and cork trees, while the northern side of its declivity affords rich pasture. North-west from this place is the "*Giara di Gestori*," of similar formation, proceeding from a crater at Ales, but strewed with numerous square masses of stone—principally fragments of obsidian, and trachytic and cellular lava—so as to resemble a city in ruins. At Monastir there is a distinct double crater, now well wooded; and a bridge constructed of fine red trap, with the bold outline of the neighbourhood, render the entrance to the village by the Strada Reale singularly picturesque. The volcanic current, flowing westward from Monastir by Siliqua and Massargiu, again approached the coast towards the southern extremity of Sardinia, extending across the deep gulf of Palmas to the islands of S. Pietro and S. Antonio, which are entirely composed of trachytic rocks. Their bold escarpments

arrested our attention on approaching the coast, near Cape Teulada, in one of our excursions to Sardinia.

Plains of lava, called "*giare*" by the natives, are often found reposing on the large tracts of recent formation, such as those of Sardara, Ploaghe, and other places; and considerable extents of trap and pitchstone are frequently met with on limestone strata, while others, tending fast to decomposition, are incorporated with an earth formed of comminuted lava. Vestiges of craters, though generally ill defined, still exist in the vicinity of Osilo, Florinas, Keremule, St. Lussurgiu, Monastir, &c. Some of these are considered, from their less broken and conical shape, and from the surrounding country consisting of fine red ashes, slaggy lava, scoria, obsidian, and indurated pozzolana, with hills of porphyritic trap, — all lying over tertiary rock, — to have been of a much more recent formation than the others, which in form present a lengthened straggling appearance, and in composition resemble those of Auvergne.

The tertiary formation lies on the west side of the principal granitic chain, and, besides forming the Campidano and the bases on which the volcanic substances rest, constitutes the hills of Cagliari, Sassari, and Sorso. The tertiary limestone seldom ranges more than 1313 feet above the level of the sea, though at Isili and some other places it is 1542 feet high. La Marmora considers it analogous to the upper tertiary formations found in the south of France, central and southern Italy, Sicily, Malta, the Balearic Islands, and Africa. The plains generally consist of a deep alluvial silt, interspersed with shingly patches, containing boulder stones. Such is the valley of the Liscia, occupying nearly the whole surface

from sea to sea towards the northern extremity of the island. This, it may be recollected, we crossed north of the Limbara. Then succeeds the series of *Campi* or *Campidani*, properly so called. We have already spoken of the vast plain of Ozieri, terminating in the south-west with its minor branches, the Campi di Mela, St. Lazarus, and Giavesu, to which it spreads transversely from the Gulf of Terranova, on the eastern coast. The bottom of this gulf forms one of the finest harbours in the island, with some trade, but the town of that name is a wretched place, remarkable for its insalubrity and the truculent character of the inhabitants.

On the western side of the island are the small *Campi* of Anglona, lying round Castel Sardo, and another plain highly cultivated between Sassari and Porto Torres. The largest of these plains on the eastern side of the island is that of Orosei, washed by several rivers having their sources in the neighbouring primitive chain of mountains. Westward of this chain we have the great central plain, which, first surrounding the Gulf of Oristano, extends in an unbroken line, for upwards of fifty miles, to the Gulf of Cagliari. This is generally spoken of as "*the Campidano*," without further specification, though its parts are distinguished by local names, such as — di Uras, di Gavino, &c.

The mineral riches of Sardinia were well known to the ancients, and vast excavations, with the remains of a number of foundries, afford ample testimony of the extent of their operations. Tradition asserts that gold was formerly extracted; and there is no doubt that silver was found in considerable quantities, as it is even now pro-

cured in assaying the lead. Copper is found near Cape Teulada, and at other places, and in one of the mines beautiful specimens of malachite occur. Iron is very plentifully distributed, but is found principally at the Monte Santo of Cape Teulado, and at Monte Ferru. The richest mine is in the Ogliastra, where the *intempérie*, however, is so malignant as to preclude the formation of an establishment. Lead is the most abundant of Sardinian ores, and its mines are profusely scattered throughout the islands.

Anthracite has been found, but only that of the Nurra district is fit for working; and the coal, though met with in various places in the secondary formations, and especially in the lower parts of the beds of magnesian limestone, is neither sufficient in quantity nor good enough in quality to be generally used. The granites of the Gallura, as we have already mentioned, were known to the ancients, and highly appreciated in Italy for their beauty and colours. Among the other mineral products may also be mentioned the porphyries of the Limbara, the basalt of Nurri, Gestori, and Serri, the alabaster of Sarcidanu, and the marbles of the Goceano and Monte Raso. Jasper abounds in the trachyte and dolomite, and large blocks, of beautiful variety, are found in some districts. Among the chalcedonies are the sardonyx, agates, and cornelian. The districts from whence the ancients obtained the sardonyx, once held in high repute, are not known, but the vicinity of Bosa abounds in chalcedenous formations. A fine quality of quartz amethyst has been obtained, and also hydrophane, known for its peculiar property of becoming transparent when immersed in water. Good turquoises

and garnets are also found, but not frequently. Though there have been so many volcanoes, and selenite, gypsum, lime, and aluminous schist frequently occur, neither sulphur nor rock salt have been discovered, and but very little alum. Mineral springs are numerous, but not much frequented.

CHAP. XXXI.

Ozieri. — A Refugee Colonel turned Cook and Traiteur. — Traces of Phenician Superstitions in Sarde Usages. — The Rites of Adonis. — Passing through the Fire to Moloch.

We entered Ozieri by a new carriage-road in the course of construction to connect it with the great Strada Reale between Sassari and Cagliari; such an undertaking being a novelty in Sardinia, and, of itself, indicating that Ozieri is an improving place. It is the chief town of a province, and contains a population of 8000, having the character of being, and who were to all appearance, thriving, industrious, and orderly. The streets are airy and clean, the principal thoroughfare being watered by a stream issuing from a handsome fountain. There are many good houses, and, including the cathedral, a large heavy building, nine churches in the city, with three massive convents. That of the Capucins, from its cypress-planted terrace, commands a fine view of the Campidano, as does the church of N. S. di Montserrato on the summit of a neighbouring hill.

The piazza, a large area in the centre of the town, was thronged with people, lounging and enjoying the evening air, when we rode into it, not having the slightest idea where we were to dismount. In this dilemma, observing

among the crowd, through which we slowly moved, a serjeant of the Bersaglieri, distinguished by the neat uniform of his rifle corps, with the drooping plume of cock's feathers in his cap, we addressed ourselves to him, having among our letters one to the Commandant of the garrison, which he undertook to deliver. Meanwhile, he turned our horses' heads to a house in the piazza, kept by an Italian, with the accommodations of which we found reason to be well satisfied.

Mr. Tyndale describes the osteria at Ozieri as execrable, while, on the other hand, Captain Smyth speaks favourably of the locanda at Tempio. At the period of our visit the circumstances were just the reverse. The "*Café et Restaurant de Rome*" proved more than its titles implied. Fully maintaining the latter of these, it supplied us also with two good apartments. Mine was festooned with bunches of grapes hung from the ceiling, and heaps of apples and pears were stored on shelves — so there was no lack of fruit; while, much to our surprise, several excellent *plats* were served for supper, the master of the house uniting the offices of *chef de cuisine* and *garçon*. On our praising his dishes,—"Ah," said he, rather theatrically, "*Je n'ai pas toujours rempli un tel métier!*"—"How so?"—"Sirs, I am a Roman exile; I have fought for liberty; I was a Colonel in the service of the republic, — and now I make dishes in Sardinia! But a good time is coming; before long, I shall be recalled, and then"—there would be an end of popes and cardinals, &c. He told us that many of Mazzini's partisans had taken refuge in Sardinia. We afterwards met with another of them under similar circumstances. Unwilling to wound the feelings of a Colonel who, like the Theban general, was also our Amphitryon,

we did not inquire under what circumstances our host had acquired the arts which he practised so well; suspecting, however, that our Colonel's earliest experience was in handling *batteries de cuisine.* In his double capacity, he might have more than rivalled in the Crimea even our "General Soyer." To recommend some liqueurs of his own composition, which certainly were excellent, he told us that Sir Harry Darrell, who was here the preceding winter, just before he was seized with the *intempérie,* prized them so much that he carried off great part of his stock.

In the course of the evening we had a visit from the Commandant. Among other civilities, he made the agreeable proposal that we should join a party formed by the Conte di T—— to hunt in the mountains south of Ozieri, following the sport for several days. This scheme suited us exactly, as it would lead us into the forest district of Barbagia, which it was our design to visit. Such is the warmth of the climate, that though it was now the middle of November, after the Commandant took his leave we sat to a late hour in our shirt-sleeves, with the casements wide open on the now solitary piazza, while I wrote and my companion was drawing. So employed, a strain of distant music stole on the ear in the stillness of the night, one of those plaintive melodies common among the Sardes, a sort of recitative by a tenor voice, with others joining in a chorus.

Among the many usages derived by the Sardes from their Phenician ancestors, one of a singular character is still practised by the Oziese, of which Father Bresciani gives the following account: — "Towards the end of March, or the beginning of April, it is the custom for

young men and women to agree together to fill the relation of godfathers and godmothers of St. John, *compare e comare* — such is the phrase — for the ensuing year. At the end of May, the proposed *comare*, having procured a segment of the bark of a cork tree, fashions it in the shape of a vase, and fills it with rich light mould in which are planted some grains of barley or wheat. The vase being placed in the sunshine, well watered and carefully tended, the seed soon germinates, blades spring up, and, making a rapid growth, in the course of twenty-one days,—that is, before the eve of St. John,—the vase is filled by a spreading and vigorous plant of young corn. It then receives the name of *Hermes*, or, more commonly, of *Su Nennere*, from a Sarde word, which possibly has the same signification as the Phenician name of garden; similar vases being called, in ancient times, 'the gardens of Adonis.' "

On the eve of St. John, the cereal vase, ornamented with ribbons, is exposed on a balcony, decorated with garlands and flags. Formerly, also, a little image in female attire, or phallic emblems moulded in clay, such as were exhibited in the feasts of Hermes, were placed among the blades of corn; but these representations have been so severely denounced by the Church, that they are fallen into disuse. The young men flock in crowds to witness the spectacle and attend the maidens who come out to grace the feast. A great fire is lit on the *piazza*, round which they leap and gambol, the couple who have agreed to be St. John's *compare* completing the ceremony in this manner:— the man is placed on one side of the fire, the woman on the other, each holding opposite ends of a stick extended over the burning embers, which they pass

rapidly backwards and forward. This is repeated three times, so that the hand of each party passes thrice through the flames. The union being thus sealed, the *comparatico*, or spiritual alliance, is considered perfect.* After that, the music strikes up, and the festival is concluded by dances, prolonged to a late hour of the night.

In some places the couple go in procession, attended by a gay company of youths and damsels, all in holiday dresses, to some country church. Arrived there, they dash the vase of Hermes against the door, so that it falls in pieces. The company then seat themselves in a circle on the grass, and feast on eggs fried with herbs, while gay tunes are played on the *lionedda*.† A cup of wine is passed round from one to another, and each, laying his hand on his neighbour, repeats, with a certain modulation of voice, supported by the music of the pipes, "*Compare e comare di San Giovanni!*" The toast is repeated, in a joyous chorus, for some time, till, at length, the company rise, still singing, and, forming a circle, dance merrily for many hours.

Father Bresciani, La Marmora, and other writers, justly

* "There is among the Sardes a degree of adopted relationship called 'compare' (*comparatico*), a stronger engagement than is known under the common acceptation of the term in other countries."—*Smyth's Sardinia*, p. 193.

† "The lionedda is a rustic musical instrument formed of reeds, similar to the Tyrrhenian and Lydian pipes we find depicted on the ancient Etruscan vases. It consists of three or four reeds of proportionate lengths to create two octaves, a *terce* and a *quint*, with a small mouthpiece at the end of each. Like a Roman tibicen, the performer takes them into his mouth, and inflates the whole at once with such an acquired skill that most of them can keep on for a couple of hours without a moment's intermission, appearing to breathe and play simultaneously. He, however, who can sound five reeds is esteemed the Coryphæus."—*Ib.* p. 192.

consider the *Nennere* as one of the many relics of the Phenician colonisation of Sardinia. Every one knows that the Sun and Moon, under various names, such as Isis and Osiris, Adonis and Astarte, were the principal objects of worship in the East from the earliest times; the sun being considered as the vivifying power of universal nature, the moon, represented as a female, deriving her light from the sun, as the passive principle of production. The abstruse doctrines on the origin of things, thus shadowed out by the ancient seers, generated the grossest ideas, expressed in the phallic emblems, the lewdness and obscenities mixed up in the popular worship of the deified principles of all existence. Of the prevalence in Sardinia of the Egypto-Phenician mythology, in times the most remote, no one who has examined the large collection of relics in the Royal Museum at Cagliari, or who consults the plates attached to La Marmora's work, can entertain any doubt. But it is surprising to find, among the usages of the Sardes at the present day, a very exact representation of the rites of a primitive religion, introduced into the island nearly thirty-five centuries ago, though it now partakes rather of the character of a popular festival than of a religious ceremony.

The Phenicians worshipped the sun under the name of Adonis, while the moon, Astarte, the Astaroth of the Bible, and the Venus-Ouranie of the Greeks, was their goddess of heaven. The story of Adonis is well known: — how, being slain by a wild boar in the Libanus, his mistress sought him in vain, with loud lamentations, throughout the earth, and following him to the infernal regions, prevailed on Proserpine by her tears and prayers to allow him to spend one half the year on earth,

to which he returned in youth perpetually renewed. Thus was shadowed out the annual course of the sun in the zodiac, and especially his return to ascendancy at the summer solstice, a season devoted to joy and festivity. In after times, this period corresponding with the feast of St. John the Baptist (24th June), that festival was celebrated in many parts of Christendom with bonfires and merriment,—usages adopted from pagan traditions. The practices of the *Nennere*, in the neighbourhood of Ozieri and other parts of Sardinia, still more distinctly coincide with the rites which accompanied the ancient festival.

It was the custom of the Phenician women, towards the end of May, to place before the shrine, or in the portico of the temples, of Adonis, certain vessels, in which were sown grains of barley or wheat. These vessels were made of wicker-work or pieces of bark, and sometimes wrought of plaster. The seeds, sown in rich earth, soon sprung up, and formed plants of luxuriant growth. These verdant vases were then called by the Phenicians "the Gardens of Adonis." The ceremonies of the summer solstice commenced over night with lamentations by the women, expressive of grief for the loss of Adonis. But on the morrow, "when the sun came out of his chamber like a giant refreshed," all was changed to joy; the garden vases were crowned with wreaths of purple and various-coloured ribbons, and the resurrection of the boy-god was celebrated by dancing, feasting, and revelry. The priestesses of Adonis led the way in a mysterious procession, bearing the vases, with other symbols already alluded to, and on re-entering the temples, dancing and singing, they cast

the vases and scattered their verdure at the feet of the god. All the women then danced in a circle round the altar, and the day and night were spent in pious orgies, feasting, and revelry. It is needless to point out the close identity of the Oziese *Nennere* with these Phenician rites.

The worship of Adonis, under the name of Tammuz *, with all its seductive abominations, was one of the Canaanitish idolatries into which the Israelites were prone to fall. Father Bresciani considers these rites to be emphatically referred to in the indignant apostrophe of Isaiah:—*How is the faithful city become an harlot! . . . ye shall be confounded with idols to which ye have sacrificed, and be ashamed of the gardens which ye have chosen.*† And again, in the prophet's terrible denunciation:—*Behold, the Lord will come with fire, and with his chariots like a whirlwind, to render his anger with fury, and his rebuke with flames of fire. . . . and the slain of the Lord shall be many. They that sanctified themselves and esteemed themselves clean in the garden of the portico* ‡ *shall be consumed together, saith the Lord.*

Whether the learned Jesuit's interpretation of these passages be well founded or not, we may add another from the prophet Ezekiel, not referred to by him, but of the application of which to some of these rites there can be no doubt. In one of those lofty visions, vividly portraying the iniquities of Israel, her idolatries and wicked abominations, the prophet's attention is directed to the

* Ezekiel, viii. 14.

† Isaiah, i. 29.

‡ Isaiah, lxvi. 15—17. *Mundos se putabant in hortis post januam.*—Vulgate.

intolerable scandal that, even *at the gate of the Lord's house, behold there sat women weeping for Tammuz.**

> "Thammuz came next behind,
> Whose annual wound in Lebanon allured
> The Syrian damsels to lament his fate,
> In amorous ditties, all a summer day,
> While smooth Adonis, from his native rock
> Ran purple to the sea, supposed with blood
> Of Thammuz, yearly wounded: the love tale
> Infected Zion's daughters with like heat;
> Whose wanton passions in the sacred porch
> Ezekiel saw, when, by the vision led,
> His eye surveyed the dark idolatries
> Of alienated Judah."—*Par. Lost*, i. 447.

One of the remarkable incidents in the Sarde *Nennere*, just described, consists in the consecration of the spiritual relation between the *compare* and *comare*, by their thrice crossing hands over the fire in the ceremonies of St. John's day. A still more extraordinary vestige of the idolatrous rite of "passing through the fire," is said to be still subsisting among the customs of the people of Logudoro, in the neighbourhood of Ozieri, and in other parts of Sardinia.

Of the worship of Moloch—*par excellence* the Syrian and Phenician god of fire—by the ancient Sardes, there is undoubted proof. We find among the prodigious quantity of such relics, collected from all parts of the island, in the Royal Museum at Cagliari, a *statuette* of this idol, supposed to have been a household god. Its features are appalling: great goggle eyes leer fiercely from their hollow sockets; the broad nostrils seem ready to sniff the fumes of the horrid sacrifice; a wide gaping mouth grins with

* Ezekiel, viii. 14.

rabid fury at the supposed victim; dark plumes spring from the forehead, like horns, and expanded wings from each shoulder and knee. The image brandishes a sword with the left hand, holding in the right a small grate, formed of metal bars. It would appear that, this being heated, the wretched victim was placed on it, and then, scorched so that the fumes of the disgusting incense savoured in the nostrils of the rabid idol, it fell upon a brazier of burning coals beneath, where it was consumed. There is another idol in this collection with the same truculent cast of features, but horned, and clasping a bunch of snakes in the right hand, a trident in the left, with serpents twined round its legs. This image has a large orifice in the belly, and flames are issuing between the ribs, so that it would appear that when the brazen image of the idol was thoroughly heated, the unhappy children intended for sacrifice were thrust into the mouth in the navel, and there grilled,—savoury morsels, on which the idol seems, from his features, rabidly gloating, while the priests, we are told, endeavoured to drown the cries of the sufferers by shouts and the noise of drums and timbrels —

> " . . . . horrid king, besmeared with blood
> Of human sacrifice, and parents' tears;
> Though, for the noise of drums and timbrels loud,
> Their children's cries unheard, that pass'd through fire
> To his grim idol "—*Par. Lost*, i. 392.

This cruel child-sacrifice was probably the giving of his seed to Moloch*, for which any Israelite, or stranger that sojourned in Israel, guilty of the crime was, according to

* Leviticus, xx. 2.

the Mosaic law, to be stoned to death. We are informed in the Sacred Records, that no such denunciations of the idolatries of the surrounding nations, no revelations of the attributes, or teachings of the pure worship of Jehovah, restrained the Israelites from the practice of the foul and cruel rites of their heathen neighbours; and we find, in the latter days of the Jewish commonwealth, the prophet Jeremiah predicting* the desolation of the people for this sin among others, that they had estranged themselves from the worship of Jehovah, and burned incense to strange gods, and filled the holy place with the blood of innocents, and burned their sons and their daughters with fire for burnt-offerings unto Baal.†

There appear to have been two modes in which the ancient idolaters devoted their children to Moloch. In one they were sacrificed and consumed in the manner already described, a burnt-offering to the cruel idol for the expiation of the sins of their parents or their people. In the other, they were only made *to pass through the fire*, in honour of the deity, and as a sort of initiation into his mysteries, and consecration to his service. Thus Ahaz, King of Judah, is said to have "made his son to pass through the fire, according to the abominations of the heathen." ‡ And it is reckoned in the catalogue of the sins of Judah, which drew on them the vengeance of God, that they "built the high places of Baal, to cause their

* Jeremiah, xix. 4, 5.

† "They sacrificed their sons and their daughters to devils, and shed innocent blood, even the blood of their sons and their daughters, whom they sacrificed unto the idols of Canaan."—*Psalm* cvi. 26, 27.

"Shall I give my first-born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?"—*Micah*, vi. 7.

‡ 2 Kings, xvi. 3.

sons and their daughters to pass through the fire unto Moloch." *

In the case of infants, it is supposed that this initiation, this "baptism by fire," was performed either by placing them on a sort of grate suspended by chains from the vault of the temple, and passed rapidly over the sacred fire, or by the priests taking the infants in their arms, and swaying them to and fro over or across the fire, chanting meanwhile certain prayers or incantations. With respect to children of older growth, they were made to leap naked through the fire before the idol, so that their whole bodies might be touched by the sacred flames, and purified, as it were, by contact with the divinity.

The Sardes, we are informed by Father Bresciani†, still preserve a custom representing this initiation by fire, but, as in other Phenician rites and practices, without the slightest idea of their profane origin. In the first days of spring, from one end of the island to the other, the villagers assemble, and light great fires in the *piazze* and at the cross-roads. The flames beginning to ascend, the children leap through them at a bound, so rapidly and with such dexterity, that when the flames are highest it is seldom that their clothes or a hair of their head are singed. They continue this practice till the fuel is reduced to embers, the musicians meanwhile playing on the *lionedda* tunes adapted to a Phyrric dance. This, says the learned Father, is a representation of the initiation through fire into the mysteries of Moloch; and, singular as its preservation may appear through the vast lapse of time since such rites were practised, we see no reason to doubt his relation,

* Jeremiah, xxxii. 35.

† Vol. ii. p. 264.

exactly as he treats on this subject after repeated visits to the island, even if the account were not confirmed by other writers, as we find it is. Bresciani's recent work is almost entirely devoted, as we have already observed, to the task of tracing numerous customs still existing among the Sardes to their eastern origin. We may find future opportunities of noticing some in which the coincidence is most striking.

CHAP. XXXII.

Expedition to the Mountains. — Environs of Ozieri. — First View of the Peaks of Genargentu. — Forests. — Value of the Oak Timber. — Cork Trees; their Produce, and Statistics of the Trade. — Hunting the Wild Boar, &c. — The Hunters' Feast. — A Bivouac in the Woods. — Notices of the Province of Barbagia. — Independence of the Mountaineers.

THE hunting excursion in the mountains south of Ozieri was in the order of the day, the expedition being on a much larger scale than that arranged by our honest Tempiese friends at the *Caffè de la Costituzione*. We were to camp out; and the party consisted of upwards of thirty horsemen, well mounted and armed, with the Conte di T—— and some other Oziese gentlemen for leaders. We had also a large pack of dogs, some of them fine animals, almost equal to bloodhounds.

Our route from the town led us over a succession of scraggy hills, with cultivation in the bottoms, and some straggling vineyards, not very flourishing. The walnut trees in the glens, and small inclosures mixed with copse wood, reminded us more of English or Welsh scenery than anything we had before seen in either of the Mediterranean islands. After passing a village standing on high ground, there was a long ascent, and in about an hour and a half

from our leaving Ozieri, on gaining the summit of a ridge of hills outlying from the Goceano range, we opened on a magnificent view of the great central chain of mountains, stretching away to the south-east in giant limbs and folds, with Genargentu and other summits shrouded in a grey silvery haze. A broad valley was spread out beneath our point of view, and the mountain range immediately opposite, the lower regions of which, as far as the eye could command the view, right and left, were clothed with dense forests, straggling down in broken masses and detached clumps to the edge of the intervening valley.

Into the depths of these forests we were to penetrate in pursuit of our game, and finer covers to be stocked with *cingale* and *capriole*, or bolder scenery for the theatre of our sylvan sport, can scarcely be imagined. It was spirit-stirring when, full in view of these grand natural features, our numerous cavalcade wound down the hill in scattered groups to the plain beneath, among pollard cork trees, just now shedding their acorns. There was deep ploughing in the rich vale watered by the upper streams of the Tirso, which winds through the valley at the foot of the Goceano range. After crossing the holms, we were on slopes of greensward, lightly feathered with the red fern, and dotted with trees, like a park.

And now we touched the verge of the forest, rough with brakes of giant heaths, such underwood alternating with grassy glades wherever the woods opened. This part of the forest consists of an unbroken mass of primitive cork trees of great size. The rugged bark, the strangely-angular growth of the limbs, hung with grey lichens in fantastic combs, and the thick olive-green foliage almost excluding the light of heaven, with the roar of the wind

through the trees,—for it was a dull, cold day, the coldest we spent in Sardinia,—with all this, a Scandinavian forest could not be more dreary and savage. After tracking the gloomy depths of shade for a considerable distance, it was an agreeable change to quit the forest and warm our blood by cantering up a slope of scrub. Then, after crossing a grassy hollow, we came among scattered woods of the most magnificent oaks, both evergreen and deciduous, I ever saw. Some of the trees were of enormous size, and if the quality of the timber be equal to the scantling, Sardinia would supply materials of great value for naval purposes.

The forests of the Barbagia, into which we now penetrated, like those of the Gallura, are principally virgin forests; the want of roads, of navigable rivers, and even of flottage, presenting formidable obstacles to the conveyance of the timber to the seaboard for exportation, though the first is not insurmountable. The forests of the Marghine and Goceano ranges round Macomer, having the little port of Boso on the western coast for an outlet, are felled to some extent. The contracts are mostly in the hands of foreigners, who obtain them on such low terms that their profits are enormous. Mr. Tyndale gives the details of a contract obtained by a Frenchman for 18,000 oak trees, at fifteen *lire nove*, 12*s*. each, the trees being said to realise from 200 to 300 francs (8*l*. to 12*l*.) each at Toulon or Marseilles. In England, we pay from 1*s*. 6*d*. to 2*s*. 3*d*. per cubic foot for very indifferent American oak, and from 1*s*. 9*d*. to 2*s*. 6*d*. for Baltic oak, perhaps superior to the Sardinian.

In the course of the Corsican notices in this volume, it was mentioned that after my return to England, I had some communications with a government department re-

specting the pine forests of Corsica.* On my taking occasion also to represent the great abundance of oak timber of large dimensions standing in Sardinia, I learnt that a valuable report on the subject had been made to the Admiralty by Mr. Craig, Her Majesty's excellent Consul-General in the island. It did not, however, appear that any steps had been taken in consequence.

Great damage is done to the forests by the herdsmen and shepherds, who are permitted, under certain restrictions, to burn down portions of underwood, such as the lentiscus, daphne, and cistus, to allow the pasturage to grow for their flocks. But though this is not legal before the eighth of September, when the intense heat of the summer has passed away, and the periodical autumnal rains are necessary for the young herbage, the law is broken, and not only accidental but wilful conflagrations have been the destruction of numerous forests. What with this waste, the injury done to the growing timber by the contractors, and the indolence of the natives, the noble forests of Sardinia are of little account. Even the government, it is said, purchase most of the oak used in the dockyards of Genoa at the French ports before mentioned.

Similar observations apply to cork, though capable of easier transport, and said to be as fine as any in the world. The Sardinian forests would supply large quantities; but it enters little into the exports of the island. We saw a great many trees stripped by the peasants for domestic uses, naked and miserable skeletons; with them it is indiscriminate slaughter, doing irreparable injury to the trees. There

* See before, p. 191. — The pine does not flourish in Sardinia. Deal planks for house-building are imported from Corsica.

now lie before me the specimens I collected of the successive layers of the bark. The spongy external cuticle, swelling into excrescences, is only used for floats of the fishermen's nets in the island. Beneath lies a coating of more compact, but cellular, tissue, of a beautiful rich colour—a sort of red umber. This layer, called *la camicia* (the shift), covers the good or "female" bark, with which every one is acquainted in the shape of corks.

The bark will bear cutting every ten years, commencing when the trees are about that age; but it should not be cut till the inner bark is an inch or an inch and a quarter thick. I consider that the bark of old trees is less valuable. Some of those we saw in the forests of the Gallura and Barbagia must have been the growth of many centuries. It is calculated that each tree, on an average, produces upwards of 30 lbs. of bark at a cutting; there are about 220 lbs. in a quintal, worth, at Marseilles, 20 francs; and a quintal of cork makes from 4500 to 5000 bottle-corks.

The woods are generally leased at an annual rent, proportioned to the number of trees; but this rent, with the cost of stripping the bark, and even the transport to the coast, form but small items in the lessee's account of profit and loss. The heaviest charges are the export duty from Sardinia, the freight, and the import duties in France, to which country, I understand, the greatest part of the cork cut in the island is shipped. The French customs' duty is 2 frs. 20 cents. the quintal. England imports no cork in its rough state from the island of Sardinia; but probably a considerable part of the manufactured corks we import from France (upwards of 226,000 lbs. in 1855*) grew in

* *Annual Statement of Trade and Navigation presented to Parliament.*

Sardinian forests. Our principal imports of unmanufactured cork bark are from Portugal, the quantity in the year just mentioned being 3300 tons and upwards. From Spain we only received 300 tons, and about 100 from Tuscany and other parts; the official value being from 32*l.* to 35*l.* per ton. It appears extraordinary that we should draw so considerable a portion of our supplies of this valuable commodity from France in a manufactured state, and subject to a heavy customs' duty and other double charges, when the raw material might be imported direct from Sardinia, subject only to an export duty of 1 fr. 20 cents. per quintal. This arises, I imagine, from the trade being left by the apathy of the islanders mostly in the hands of French houses, who take leases of the forests and conduct the whole operations.

These details, though they smack of woodcraft, have led us away from our sylvan sports. We had reached the point where the dogs were thrown into the covers with a party detached to drive the woods. Having given a description in a former chapter of the *caccia clamorosa*, as wild boar hunting is well termed by the Sardes, repetition would be wearisome. It was conducted precisely as on the former occasion, except that the proceedings were on a more extended scale, and led us far among wilder and more varied scenery. As before, the stations of the hunters were assigned at about seventy or eighty paces apart, with the horses tethered in the rear. The line of shooters was first formed among the heather on the easy slope of a glen, lightly sprinkled with wood. The exhilarating sounds of the men and dogs breaking the silence of the woods as they drove the game before them, the minutes

of eager expectation, the sharp look-out, the ringing shots, may now be easily imagined.

My fellow-traveller was fortunate enough to knock over the first wild boar that ran the gauntlet of the *cordon*, when the Count's gun had missed fire from the cap having become damp. Our next position was in an open piece of forest, where luck planted me in a notched cork tree, standing on a wooded knoll, at which several avenues met, so that I had not only a good chance of a shot, but the command of the *champ de bataille* on all sides. Wild boars were plentiful, roebucks not so, hares innumerable in some of our *battues*. I confess, however, that the incident in the day's sport in which I felt most interest was when a wild boar, slightly wounded, rushed by one of my posts, pursued by some of the dogs. Throwing myself on my spirited barb, I led the chase, followed by my neighbours, right and left, and was lucky enough to be in at the death, after a sharp run. Under such circumstances the wild boar, standing at bay with his formidable tusks, becomes dangerous to the dogs, if not to the hunters. Then the sharp steel is wanting. Oh, for a boar spear! instead of having to despatch the rabid animal by a shot.

Having had a long morning's ride, our first day's *battue* was closed early. The party defiled in loose order among the trees in the open forest, cantered over springy turf, and brushed through patches of fern to a sheltered dell in which we were to bivouac, and where the sumpter horses had already halted. Then followed such a rude feast as in all my rambles I had never before chanced to witness. Imagine the grassy margin of a rivulet, surrounded by thick bushes, which spread in brakes throughout the glen under scattered oaks, intermingled with crags and detached

masses of rock, covered with white lichens. On the grass are piles of flat bread, which served for plates, loads of sausages, hams, cheeses, bundles of radishes, and heaps of apples, pears, grapes, and chestnuts, strewed about in the happiest confusion, with no lack of flasks and runlets of various sorts of wines. Our contribution to the pic-nic, a basket of signor Juliani's best cold dishes and larded fowls, seemed perfectly insignificant. Add to all this, the game we had bagged,—wild boar and roebuck, to say nothing of hares,—and the general stock might seem inexhaustible, if one glance at the crowd of hungry hunters did not banish the thought.

Eager for the attack, they were busily employed in preparations for it. Horses were unsaddled and tethered among the bushes, guns piled or rested against the boughs, wood collected, fires lighted, and dagger-knives whetted, ready to rip open and quarter the game. The leaders only stood apart, under a spreading tree. They had a grave duty to perform in apportioning the spoils among those who had been successful in the day's sport. This was done with great exactness and the perfect equality existing among all ranks on these occasions. It was Robin Hood and his merry men all through; or might have been taken for an episode of Sarde banditti life, except that, our party being all honest fellows, there was no plunder to divide. By the laws of the chase in Sardinia, the hunter to whose gun an animal falls is entitled exclusively to some distinct portion, varying with the species of the game,—sometimes to the skin, sometimes to the choicest parts of the *roba interiora*, the intestines; the rest falls into the common stock. The award being made, such choice morsels, with rashers of hog and venison steaks, were grilled over the

embers on skewers of sweet wood, and handed round, filled each pause in the attack on the cold provisions, portions being detached by the formidable *couteaux de chasse* with which every man was armed; nor did English steel fail of doing its duty.

Though the party distributed themselves indiscriminately on the grass, they naturally fell into familiar messes, perfect harmony and good fellowship prevailing. But at times there was great confusion. Now, the horses, kicking and fighting, got free from their tethers, and there was a rush of the hunters to restore order; while the ravenous hounds, not content with the bones and fragments thrown to them, were making perpetual inroads on the circle of guests, and snatching at the morsels they were appropriating to themselves. The feast was drawing to a close, when Count T—— proposed the health of the foreigners associated in their sports, and the toast, with the reply, which, if not eloquent, was short and feeling,—"*Agli nobili cacciatori della Sardegna, e di noi forestieri li sozii amicissimi, benevolentissimi,*" &c., &c., &c., drew forth *ev-vivas* which made the old woods ring to the echo. And now all started on their legs, and there was a rush to the guns as if scouts had suddenly announced that the woods were filled with enemies. As an hour or two of daylight still remained, a *bersaglio*, or match of shooting at a mark, had been arranged during the feast.

The *bersaglio* is a favourite amusement of the Sardes, forming part of most of their festivities; and constant practice on these occasions, and in the field, makes them expert shots. Our party now addressed themselves to this exercise of skill with passionate eagerness. Some ran to fix a small card against the bole of a tree, eighty or a

hundred yards distant, the rest gathered round the point of sight, loading their guns or applying caps, all talking rapidly, in sharp tones, as if they were quarrelling. They formed picturesque groups, in all attitudes — those mountain rangers, with their semi-Moorish costume, embroidered pouches, and bright ornamented arms, their dark-olive complexions and bushy hair, in strong contrast with their visitors from the north, in gray plaid and brown felt, unmistakable in their physiognomy, though almost as hairy and sunburnt as the children of the soil. The match was well contested, the card being often hit; which, as the Sarde guns are not rifled, may be considered good shooting, at the distance stated. The firing was continued till it was almost dark with eager zest, but much irregularity, and almost as great an expenditure of animal spirits in vociferation, as of powder and bullets.

An hour after sunset, when night came on, fresh wood was heaped on the smouldering fires, and after sitting round them, smoking and chatting, the party gradually broke up, some stretching themselves near the embers, and the rest seeking some shelter for the night, about which a Sarde mountaineer is not fastidious, any bush or hollow in a rock serving his purpose. For ourselves, after exchanging the "*felice notte*" with the Count and his friends, we lingered over a scene so singular in civilised Europe, though with such I had been familiar in other hemispheres. The smouldering fires cast fitful gleams on piled arms and the hardy men sleeping around in their sheepskins or shaggy cloaks; the deep silence of the woods was only broken by a neighing horse or the bay of a hound, and presently the stars shone out from the vault of heaven with a lustre unknown in northern climes. We,

too, lay down ensconced in a brake, the younger traveller disdaining any other wrapping than his plaid, and the elder luxuriously enveloped in a couple of blankets which formed part of his equipments, having his saddle for a pillow. With sound sleep, the rivulet for our ablutions, and a hot cup of coffee, bread, cheese, and fruit for the *collazione*,—what more could be wanting?

In this expedition one day was like another, except in the ever-varying scenery, interesting enough to the traveller, but wearisome in description. Suffice it to say, that on the third morning, the provisions being exhausted, and no fresh supplies to be had in that wild country, our leaders decided on returning to Ozieri. It then became a question with us whether we should return with them, or pursue the mountain tracks to Nuoro, whence it was only two days' journey to the foot of Monte Genargentu, on the higher regions of which it had been our intention to hunt the *moufflon*, proceeding then, along byroads, through a chain of mountain villages to Cagliari. Nuoro, a poor place, though dignified with the title of "*città*," and a large ecclesiastical establishment, stands high on a great table-land in the heart of the central chain, answering, in many respects, to the Corte of the sister island. This ancient capital of Barbagia is still the chief place of a province containing a population of 54,000 souls, very much scattered through an extensive and mountainous district, but containing many large villages, such as Fonni, Tonara, and Aritzu already mentioned.

The mountaineers of Barbagia have been distinguished from the earliest times for their indomitable courage and spirit of independence. Some of the best ancient writers relate that Iolaus, son of Iphicles, king of Thessaly, and

nephew of Hercules, settled Greek colonies in this part of the island. The expedition, in which he was joined by the Thespiadæ, was undertaken in obedience to the oracle of Delphi; and it declared that, on their establishing themselves in Sardinia, they would never be conquered. Iolaus is said to have been buried in this district, after founding many cities; and, the Greek colonists intermingling with the native Sardes, their descendants, deriving their name of Iolaese or Iliese from their founder, became the most powerful race in the island,—just as the Roumains of Wallachia, boasting their descent from Trajan's Dacian colonists, long proved their right to the proud patronymic.

The Iolaese offered a determined resistance to the Carthaginian invaders, and, on the decline of their power in Sardinia, maintained, during a long series of years, an unequal contest with the Roman legions; for, though often worsted in pitched battles, they found a safe and impregnable retreat in their mountain fastnesses. The triumphs of the Romans figure in history; but the traditions of the Sardes do justice to the heroic and patriarchal chiefs who fought in defence of their country. In after times, the Barbaricini (the Barbari of the Romans, whence Barbagia) exhibited their hereditary warlike spirit in resisting the invasions of the Moors; and, when Sardinia passed to the crown of Arragon, they refused to acknowledge Alfonso's rights and authority, resisting all claims of homage, tribute, or service. A sullen submission of three centuries to their Spanish sovereigns had not effaced their spirit of independence, and the Barbaricini were in arms against an unjust tax, and, moving their wives, children, and valuables to the mountains, kept the Spaniards entirely at bay, when, in 1719, Sardinia was

ceded to the house of Savoy. The demand being prudently withdrawn, they returned to their villages, and their allegiance to the present dynasty has not been broken by any open revolt. But the indomitable spirit of their race has still been exhibited in sullen or violent resistance to the Piedmontese authorities. Driven by the corrupt administration of the laws to take a wild and summary justice, every man's hand has been against his neighbours' and the government officials. Mr. Tyndale states "that upwards of 100 (or one in every 279) annually fall victims to *vendetta*, in contest with their enemies, or with the authorities. Those openly known to live in the mountains as *fuorusciti*, of some kind, are more than 300; and to them may be added another 300 unknown to the Government, so that, on an average, there is nearly one in every 46 an outcast from society, a fugitive from his hearth." I was happy to learn, on a second visit to the island of Sardinia, in 1857, that the numbers of these unhappy men were decreasing, outrages had diminished, and the system of *vendetta* was gradually dying out. This, it was stated, principally resulted from the Barbaricini beginning to feel that the government is able and willing to afford them the redress of their private wrongs, and the personal protection which, as individuals or banded together, they have so long asserted by the red hand in defiance of the authorities.

Thus the independence predicted by the oracle of Delphi to the race of Iolaus, preserved for untold centuries and through all political changes, has been maintained to the last by their direct descendants, the *fuorusciti* of Barbagia. They were in arms as late as our travels in 1853, and we were officially warned against venturing into the mountains without due precautions. It was not, however,

this state of affairs which interfered with the prosecution of our journey, as we did not doubt being able to establish, as foreigners, amicable relations with their chiefs. Such a state of society could not be without interest, the scenery is represented as most romantic, the shooting excellent; but our time was limited, and, reserving the expedition to Barbagia for a future opportunity, we reluctantly retraced our steps to Ozieri, in company with our friendly hunters.

CHAP. XXXIII.

Leave Ozieri. — The New Road and Travelling in the Campagna. — Monte Santo. — Scenes at the Halfway House. — Volcanic Hills. — Sassari; its History. — Liberal opinions of the Sassarese. — Constitutional Government. — Reforms wanted in Sardinia. — Means for its Improvement.

OZIERI standing on the verge of the great Sardinian plains, we dismissed our *cavallante*, and changed our mode of travelling. A primitive *diligence* plies occasionally between Ozieri and Sassari, by the new road just constructed to join the Strada Reale between Cagliari and Porto Torres. Missing the opportunity during our hunting excursion, we hired a *voiture* for the day's journey. It was comparatively a smart affair, a light *calèche* with bright yellow pannels, and drawn by a pair of quick-stepping horses; so that we travelled in much comfort. Carriages are seldom found in the island except on this great road, and in a few of the principal towns; the mode of travelling in the interior, for persons of all ranks and both sexes, being either on horseback or on oxen.*

* The vehicular statistics of Sardinia, ten years before, as summed up by Mr. Warre Tyndale, show three vehicles for hire at Porto Torres, seven at Sassari, four at Macomer, and about twenty at Cagliari. These and about ten private carriages made the total in this island: sufficient, he adds, for the unlocomotive propensities of the inhabitants and their almost roadless country. Things were not much improved at the period of our visit.

We rattled out of Ozieri with a flourish of the driver's horn, more intent on which than on the management of his spirited horses he nearly brought us to grief. After some narrow escapes of being capsized over the heaps of stones scattered along the new road, now in the course of construction, we came to a dead lock in an excavation; and one of the horses, though mettlesome enough, hung in the collar, refusing to draw. It was said to be an Irish horse, but how or when it got to Sardinia was as much a myth as the immigration of some of the various races by which the island is said to have been peopled in ancient times. However, Miss Edgeworth's Irish postilion and "Knockecroghery," could scarcely have afforded us more amusement than our Sarde driver and his horse, whose good qualities he ludicrously vaunted, alternately cursing and glorifying, thumping and coaxing, the vicious beast, while we heaved at the wheels. Our united efforts at length succeeded in extricating the vehicle from the sandy hollow; and after jolting for awhile over the new-formed road, the material having become solid and compact, we rolled at our ease across the plain. I remarked, that though the road was well levelled and macadamised, scarcely a man was to be seen employed in the present operations. Boys were breaking the metal, and girls carrying it in baskets on their heads.

The plains being undulating, extensive views are commanded by the eminences far away over the Campidano, backed by the Limbara mountains on the north-west. We passed the village of Nores, pleasantly situated on a hill at the verge of the Ozieri plain, across which Monte Santo, appearing from this point a long ridge, rose in full view to our left, 2000 feet high. The junction with the

Strada Reale from Cagliari to Sassari was reached soon afterwards. About noon, we halted while the horses baited at a roadside *locanda*, the half-way house to Sassari, standing at the foot of Monte Santo, here reduced to the shape of a round-topped mountain. Lesser hills fell away to the great plain, the slopes and flats being sprinkled with large flocks of sheep. On a hillock two or three miles distant, were the ruins of a Nuraghe, mellowed to a rich orange tint.

It was a pleasant spot, and at the present moment full of life, numbers of Sardes of all classes having, like ourselves, halted there for rest. Two *voitures* were drawn up by the roadside, as well as several light carts, with high wheels and tilts made of rushes or cloth, conveying goods to and fro between Cagliari and Sassari. Women in yellow petticoats and red mantles, with bright kerchiefs round their heads, and men in their white shirt sleeves open to the elbow, and Moorish cotton trowsers, contrasting with their dark jackets, caps, and gaiters, were bustling about, fetching water and fodder for the horses. Others were sitting and eating under the shade of a group of weeping willows, overshadowing a bason of pure water, fed by a streamlet trickling down from the neighbouring hills. Intermingled with these were Sarde cavaliers, in a more brilliant costume; and a priest, carrying a huge crimson umbrella, came forth from the *locanda*, and with his attendants, mounting their horses, proceeded on their journey at a pace suited to the priest's gravity, and the requirements of his gorgeous canopy.

Presently a horn sounded, and a coach came thundering down the hill,—the diligence on its daily service between the two capitals. The vehicle was double-bodied, well

horsed, and, altogether, a superior turn-out. We took the opportunity of its pulling up for a moment to bespeak beds at Sassari. After amusing ourselves with a scene of life on the road not often witnessed in Sardinia,—having already lunched in our *voiture* on a basket of grapes, with bread, and a bottle of the excellent white wine of Oristano, —we sauntered up the course of the rivulet to its source, at the foot of a rock among the woods. There we drank of the clear fountain, and washed; bees humming among the flowers, as in the height of the summer, and the gabble from the roadside below, coming up mixed with the cries of the carrier's fierce dogs. The spot commanded charming views of Monte Santo and the far-stretching *campagna* beneath.

Pursuing our route, the country assumed a peculiar aspect from the number of the flat-topped hills, swelling in green slopes out of the plains which spread before us in long sweeps. These vividly green hillocks are probably the craters of long extinct volcanoes, as we were now in the line, and near the centre, of that wide igneous action mentioned in a former chapter. There were signs of more extensive cultivation than we had hitherto observed, and the evident fertility of the soil left no doubt on the mind of its powers of production under a better system. Large flocks of sheep were feeding in every direction; this being the season for their being driven from the mountains for pasture and shelter in the teeming plains. Sardinia remains still in that pastoral state, which, however picturesque to the eyes of the traveller, as well as suited to the indolent habits of the Sarde peasant, must yield to agricultural progress, or, at least, be reduced within due bounds, before the soil of the island can be made the

source of that wealth which, with proper cultivation, large portions of it are naturally fitted to yield. Sardinia will continue to be poor and uncivilised while vast tracts of country are open to almost promiscuous and lawless commonage, and while the occupation of the shepherd, with all its hardships, is esteemed preferable and more honourable than that of the tiller of the soil.

After this, we got among hills bounding the plain in the neighbourhood of Florinas and Campo di Mela. The country became rugged, and, after crossing a river, over a still perfect Roman bridge, of several arches, with massive substructions of large square stones, which we alighted to examine, there commenced a steep ascent, winding among woods. We walked up it by moonlight, our driver's bugle echoing that of a *diligence* which preceded us at some distance in mounting the pass. Sassari was entered by an arched and embattled gateway in the square-towered wall surrounding the place; and, passing through the best quarter of the town, the dark mass of the citadel contrasting well with the white *façades* and lofty colonnades of the neighbouring houses, we were set down at the Albergo di Progresso, opposite the great convent of St. Pietro, one of the richest of the many religious houses of which Sassari once boasted. The accommodations at the hotel were the best we enjoyed in the island.

Sassari, the second city of Sardinia, containing a population of some 30,000 souls, has always been a jealous rival of Cagliari, the metropolis, boasting an independent history of its own, of which it has just pretensions to be proud. It was an insignificant village till the inhabitants of Porto-Torres,—the ancient *Turris Libysonis*, founded on the neighbouring coast by the Greeks, and colonised by the

Romans,—were driven by the incursions of the Saracen corsairs, and, finally, by the ruin of their town by the Genoese, in 1166, to seek a refuge further inland. They established themselves at Sassari, where the long street, still called Turritana, was named from the new settlers. In 1441, the archiepiscopal see and chapter of St. Gavino, near Porto-Torres, were translated to Sassari by Pope Eugenius IV., and thenceforward it rivalled the metropolis in opulence and power. When, in the thirteenth century, the Genoese occupied the northern division of the island, Sassari became a republic, entering into an alliance, offensive and defensive, with that of Genoa. The articles of the treaty are a curious amalgamation of independence assumed by the one, and of interference and jurisdiction claimed by the other. The general effect was, that the Sassarese accepted annually from the Genoese a Podesta, who swore fidelity to their constitution; and the Sassarese assert that while their city was under the protection of Genoa, they only styled that haughty republic in their statutes and diplomas, "*Mater et Magistra, sed non Domina:*" "*non Signora, ma Amica.*"

Mutual quarrels induced a rupture of the alliance in 1306, and on the Arragonese kings advancing pretensions to the sovereignty of the island, the Sassarese made a voluntary transfer of their allegiance to Diego II. of Arragon, who, in return, guaranteed their rights and privileges; and Sassari continued to be governed as a republic long after the Spanish conquest in 1325. The city, however, suffered severely during the protracted contests between the Genoese, Pisans, and the Giudici of Arborea, for the expulsion of the Spaniards; sustaining no less than ten sieges, courageously defended, in the short

interval between 1332 and 1409. It continued to be the victim of contending parties till 1420, when for the last time, and after a struggle of nearly a hundred years, it fell into the hands of Alfonso V., who conferred on it the title of "Città Reale." In the middle of the fifteenth century it flourished both commercially and politically, enjoying privileges beyond any other town in the island. From this power and prosperity arose its rivalry with Cagliari; and the jealousies and dissensions in matters of government, religion, and education, surviving the transference of the sovereignty to the House of Savoy, have descended from generation to generation.

This feeling prevails to the present day, partly owing, perhaps, to the circumstance of society in Sassari being less under the influence of Piedmontese and Continental opinions than in the capital, Cagliari,—and partly to the Sassarese population being mostly of Genoese extraction. The descendants of these settlers having almost all the trade, commerce, and employment in their hands, form a very important and influential middle class. I found at Sassari opinions more distinctly pronounced on the abuses of the government, and the necessity of reforms in the various branches of the administration, than I have reason to believe they are in the more courtly circles of Cagliari. Some numbers of a work, in course of publication, were put into my hands during our stay at Sassari, in which these topics were discussed in a sensible, bold, but temperate style.* Though written by a foreigner, a Venetian refugee, I have no doubt, from the manner in which it was spoken of by well-informed persons, and

* *Memorie Politico-Economiche intorno alla Sardegna nel* 1852, *di Vincenzo Sala, da Venezia. Seconda Edizione, riveduta dall' Autore.*

from its having reached a second edition, that it may be accepted as representing the opinions of a large class of the Sassarese, and I imagine of Sardes in general.

Much interest attaches to the working of the constitutional system in the Sardinian dominions, not only politically, but in its effects on the social and economical condition of the country. Hitherto the island of Sardinia has been treated by the cabinet of Turin much as it was long the misfortune of the English government to deal with Ireland; regarding the native race as a conquered, but turbulent, impracticable and semi-barbarous people; the consequences of such misrule being poverty, disaffection and bloodshed. But I trust we see the dawn of brighter days, when this fine island, partaking of the benefits following in the train of constitutional government, — its wrongs redressed, its great natural resources developed, and the natural genius and many virtues of its inhabitants being cultivated and having free scope, — will be no insignificant jewel in the crown which assumed its regal title from this insular possession.

With our own happy country in the van of political, social, and material progress, there are three secondary European states, which, in our own memory, have raised the banner of freedom, and are consistently marching under it with firm, vigorous, and well-poised steps. It need hardly be explained that we speak of Norway, Belgium, and Sardinia.* Occupying, geographically and politically, important positions ranging, at wide intervals, from the far north to the extreme south of Europe, these

* We do not include, in the enumeration of free states, the Swiss confederacy, nor flourishing Holland. Both date their liberties to much earlier times.

small, flourishing, and well-ordered states, offer a spectacle as full of hope and encouragement to all lovers of constitutional liberty, as it must necessarily be offensive to the despotic governments of the great continental monarchies, on whose thresholds the altars of freedom, newly lighted, have burnt with so steady and pure a flame. They may serve as beacon-lights to European populations gasping for that political regeneration, the hour of which will assuredly come, and may not be far distant.

Of the state and prospects of the kingdom of Norway,* we have treated in another work. The democratic element is so predominant in its constitutional code, that the only fear was lest it should clash with the executive functions of even a limited monarchy. But, hitherto, the natural good sense, patriotism, and loyalty of the Norwegian people, though represented in a Storthing of peasant farmers, — and we may add, the moderation displayed by the Bernadotte dynasty, — have so obviated the difficulties of a hastily formed, and somewhat crude, code of fundamental laws, that it has been harmoniously worked to the great benefit of the nation. In Belgium, notwithstanding religious antagonisms, which have also perplexed the young councils of Sardinia, the constitutional system has been so consolidated, under the rule of a sagacious prince, that it may be hoped its permanence is secured. We need not speak of the rising fortunes of the Sardinian States, the only hope of fair Italy. The eyes of Europe are upon them; they are closely watched by friends and foes. Our business at present is, not with the political, but with the social and material, condition of the insular kingdom which

* *Norway in* 1848 *and* 1849. Longman and Co.

forms a valuable portion of those singularly aggregated dominions. In a work devoted to a survey of the island, even a passing traveller may be pardoned for pausing in his narrative while he collects some cursory notices of its present condition under these aspects, and its requirements for improvement.

All enlightened Sardes with whom we conversed unite with Signor Sala, who has devoted several sections of his work to the subject, in representing the corruption and other abuses pervading the administration of justice in Sardinia, as lying at the root of its greatest social evil. It is the ready excuse for rude justice, for private revenge, for the assertion of the rights of persons or of things by the strong hand, that the laws are inoperative, or iniquitously administered. There is too much reason to believe that this has been the normal state of Sardinia under all its rulers for ages past. And when at the same time we find the natural instincts of the people to be turbulent and lawless, and prone to theft and robbery, and consider the facilities afforded by a wild, mountainous, and densely wooded country, for the commission of crimes of violence, the scenes of bloodshed and rapine by which it has been desolated, are not to be wondered at. In the absence of a vigorous justice, and a sufficient military or police force for the protection of property, a voluntary association sprung up, consisting of armed men, under the name of Barancelli, who, for a sort of black mail paid by the peasants, undertook to recover their stolen cattle, or indemnify them for the loss. They fell, however, into disrepute, and I believe have been disbanded. Banditism has been finally and effectually extinguished in Corsica, as related in a former part of this work, by a total disarma-

ment of the population, without respect of persons, or of the purposes for which fire-arms may be properly required. So stern a measure is neither suited to the genius of the Sardes or their rulers. With a numerous resident gentry, who, with their retainers, and the great mass of the population, are passionately fond of the chase, and with wastes so stocked with destructive wild animals, the total prohibition of fire-arms must be both unpopular and impolitic. The law, however, requires that no one shall carry them without a license. But it is not, or cannot be, enforced, for we saw them in every one's hands.

It gave me great pleasure to learn, as it has been already stated, on a recent visit to Sardinia, that the administration of the law was become more pure, the police improved, outrages were less frequent, and confident hopes entertained that banditism, now confined to a small number of outlaws, would gradually die out. There is no doubt it will do so when the laws are respected as in other parts of the Sardinian dominions.

In regard to the judges and other civil functionaries, we found everywhere the deepest antipathy towards the Piedmontese. Sardinia for the Sardes, was like the cry we often hear from our own sister island. Sala treats the subject with his usual temper and good sense. He admits the advantages of an administration conducted by natives possessing a knowledge of the country, conversant with its language and customs, and of a temper more conciliatory than foreigners invested with authority are likely to exhibit. He also admits that there is extreme mediocrity, and even ignorance, in the lower class of functionaries who arrive in the island with appointments obtained in Turin or Genoa. Sala relates a ludicrous story of one of

these officials, who chanced to be his companion in the steam-boat from Genoa to Cagliari, being recommended to the Intendant-General as the chief of a department under him. When half-way across, the candidate for office had yet to learn whither they were bent,—"*Si fece interrogarci per dove possimo diretti.*" Afterwards, says Sala, when chatting in Cagliari, he reproached the Sardes with ignorance and indolence because, though their land was surrounded by the sea, they did not know how to supply themselves with a river,—"*Non sapevano formarsi un fiume;*" adding, with great self-complacency,—"*Li civilizzeremo, li civilizzeremo!*"

Such impertinences are calculated to irritate the native Sardes against the continental officials; and they are generally detested. Our author, however, candidly allows that intrigue prevails so universally in the island, and the influences of relationship and connexions are so great, as to raise suspicions of the purity and fairness of native functionaries, especially of those who have been brought up under the old system, — a school of corruption. Signor Sala therefore suggests, that while appointments, both on the continent and the island, should be equally open to competent candidates, without respect of birth, great advantages would be obtained by this interchange. The Sardes being habituated by residence for a while, and the transaction of business, on Terra Firma; and thus withdrawn from unfavourable influences, would be prepared to fill honourably offices at home. This seems a wise and obvious mode of abating a grievance of which the Sardes not unjustly complain.

Having mentioned before the gigantic evil of the vast extent of commonage claimed and exercised throughout the

island, destructive of the rights of property and quite incompatible with agricultural progress, I have only to add that measures are contemplated for facilitating and protecting inclosures where lawfully made; but so as not to injure the great interest of the proprietors of flocks and herds, the staple production of the island. In this view it is proposed to place the great domains of the communes under better management.

Among various other reforms and beneficial projects to which the attention of a more enlightened government must be directed, in order to raise Sardinia to the rank she is entitled to hold by the extent of her resources, and the intelligence of great numbers of her inhabitants, we can only enumerate, without observation, the educational system generally, including a reform of the Universities of Cagliari and Sassari,—sanitary measures tending, at least, to alleviate the insalubrity which is the scourge of the island, — improved police arrangements throughout the interior,—an increased supply of the circulating medium, the deficiency of which is represented as extreme and injurious to trade, and "Agrarian Banks;"—an entire new system of communal roads, connected with the great national highways, which roads, it is said, would double the value of property wherever they passed,—the protection and careful administration of the forests,—measures for developing the great mineral wealth of the island,—and the encouragement of the coral fisheries.

Nor have we exhausted the list; but enough has been shown to satisfy the reader who accepts the statements we have laid before him, from our own observation and from the best information of the capabilities of Sardinia and its present condition,—how much is required to place her on

a footing with other European states, and with what hope of eventual success. A vast field is, indeed, open for cultivation by an enlightened and patriotic administration. Great difficulties will have to be encountered, arising mainly from the indolence, the supineness, the prejudices, the ignorance, and the poverty of the Sarde population. The progress must be gradual, but noble will be the reward earned by that exercise of vigour, discretion, and perseverance, by which the obstacles to improvement may be overcome.

There is one highly gifted man, who has long filled a distinguished place in the service of his sovereign and the eyes of the world, in whose hands the task of regenerating Sardinia, herculean as it may appear, would be not only a labour of love, but facile comparatively with any others on which it may devolve. I speak of General the Count Alberto di Marmora, known to all Europe by his Topographical Survey, and his able work, the *Voyage en Sardaigne*, of which two additional volumes have been recently published. But, perhaps, his devotion to the best interests of the Sarde people, his labours in that cause, and the esteem and affection with which he is universally regarded in the island are less understood. Enjoying also the confidence of the king and his ministers, General La Marmora is eminently fitted to carry out the beneficial designs which he has long conceived and furthered; but his advanced age precludes the hope of his seeing them accomplished. May his mantle fall on no unworthy successor!

One subject of special interest in connection with Sardinian progress has been reserved for a more particular notice than we have been able to afford most others, both

on account of its importance, and its having much engaged the attention of the master-mind most conversant with the situation of affairs. At the outset of our rambles in Sardinia, it was observed that the Sardes are averse to maritime occupations; the Iliese of La Madelena, who are so employed to some extent, being a distinct race. Sardinia has no mercantile marine. Signor Sala states that there are only four or five vessels belonging to natives, and, of these, two are the property of the same rich owner. Considering the advantages of her position, and the products the island is capable of supplying for an active commerce, he considers the want of a mercantile marine one of Sardinia's greatest misfortunes, and treats with much good sense of the means calculated to promote its establishment.*

General La Marmora drew attention to the subject in a pamphlet published at Cagliari in 1850, under the title of *Questioni marittimi spettanti all' isola di Sardegna;* and resumed the subject in 1856, in another work, which he was so obliging as to give me, when at Cagliari, in 1857. It

* La sua positura nel Mediterraneo la rende intermediara fra l' Africa e l' Europa; fra il porto di Marsiglia da una parte, quelli di Genova e Livorno dall' altra, e per conseguenza potrebbe proccaciarsi un conspicuo reddito dal cabottagio. Se si considera che la francia scarreggia di marina mercantile, relativemente alla sua potenza ed a suoi besogni, non sembrerà per certo un sogno l' asserire che la Sardegna si troverebbe a miglior portata di concorrere a soddisfare le sue bisogne di transporte, principalmente per le coste d' Africa, dove la colonia francese va prendendo sempre maggiore sviluppo, e prenunzia un avvenire fecondo. Si la città di Cagliari e le altre terre littorale possedessero una marina mercantile, quante fonti di richezza non troverebbe la Sardegna lungo le coste d' Italia, di Francia, di Spagna e d' Africa! Non si credono queste visioni o travidementi d' immaginazione; che anzi non temiamo d' affirmare ch' essa potrebbe divenire, un giorno, *la piccola Inghilterra del Mediterraneo.*— *Memorie Politico-Economiche,* p. 134.

originated in the expected completion of the line of Electric Telegraph between Algeria, Sardinia, Corsica, and the continent of Europe; its connexion with which, and its bearings on commerce, I may have to refer to on a future occasion. The General comments on the extraordinary fact, that, in an island 800 miles in circumference, there only exist four sea-ports, properly so called. These are Cagliari, on the south coast, Terranova, on the east, Porto-Torres, on the north, and Alghero on the west. All the other villages and towns on the coast stand more or less distantly from it, and cannot be called maritime. He considers this depopulation of the coast as the deplorable consequence of the devastations of the Saracen corsairs, and the continual piracy which was carried on to a late period, and only ceased on the conquest of Algeria by the French.

It would be foreign to our province to detail the projects which General La Marmora suggests, or advocates, for giving expansion to the commerce of Sardinia,—such as the establishment of light-houses on Cape Spartivento, and other points; improvements in the harbour of Cagliari, and a better supply of the place with water. He considers the now almost deserted town and port of Terranova, at the head of the fine gulf *Degli Aranci*, on the north-eastern coast, to be a point of great importance from its position in face of the Italian ports, and as the proper station for the postal steamboats communicating between Genoa and the island of Sardinia. In reference to this, he mentions that the project of a law for encouraging colonisation in the island, was presented by the Minister to the Chamber of Deputies in February, 1856; the proposal being to grant 60,000 hectares of the national domains to a company formed for establishing agrarian colonies. The cabinet of

Turin, then, are alive to one of the great wants of Sardinia, —an increased and industrious agricultural population. But General La Marmora desires that a part of the colonists should be maritime, drawn from La Madalena, Genoa, and other ports, and settled at the proposed new harbour of Terranova.

By these and other aids, the General is sanguine that Sardinia will, ere long, take the place naturally belonging to it among maritime countries, and he repeats as a motto to his recent pamphlet, a sentence from the first edition of his *Voyage en Sardaigne*, published in 1826, to which, he remarks, recent events have almost given the character of a prediction in the course of speedy accomplishment:— *Qui sait si un jour, par suite des progrès que fait depuis quelque temps l'Egypte moderne, le commerce des Indes Orientales ne prendra pas la route de la Mer-Rouge et de Suez? La Sardaigne, alors, ne pourrait-elle pas devenir la plus belle et la plus commode échelle de la Méditerranée?*

The cabinet of Turin and the national legislature must be well disposed to foster the commerce and agriculture, the natural resources, and social interests of the Sardes. Should the Ministers be negligent or ill-advised, the representatives of the people, or, in the last resort, the Sarde constituencies, have their constitutional remedy. British institutions are said to be models imitated in the young commonwealth. They present similar features; and let it be recollected what influence either the Irish or the Scotch members, acting in concert in our House of Commons, can bring to bear on any question affecting the interests of their respective countries. The Sardes return twenty-four deputies to the popular chamber, and if they be good men and true, inaccessible to intrigue, and find

in their patriotism a bond of union, their united votes cannot be disregarded by any Minister.

How different is the case of Corsica, the sister island! In reviewing her industrial position we quoted rather largely from a *Procès-Verbal* of the deliberations of the Council-General, also an elective body, which canvasses, but not regulates, the internal administration of the island. It arrives at certain conclusions, but without any power to give them effect. "Le Conseil-Général émet le vœu," "appelle l'attention," are the phrases wherewith, with bated breath, the representatives of the people convey their resolutions to the foot of the throne. The courtly Prefect communicates them to the Minister of the Interior, and he, the organ of the Imperial will, rejects, confirms, or modifies the "vœu." The Sarde representatives meet the Ministers face to face in the Parliament at Turin, demand, discuss, explain, remonstrate, carry their point, or are content to yield to a majority of the Chamber. With a free press, the public learns all; public opinion ratifies or condemns the vote. It will prevail in the end. Herein lies the difference between a despotic and a popular government. A bright day dawned on the future destinies of Sardinia, when it exchanged the one for the other.

CHAP. XXXIV.

Alghero — Notice of. — The Cathedral of Sassari. — University. — Museum. — A Student's private Cabinet. — Excursion to a Nuraghe — Description of. — Remarks on the Origin and Design of these Structures.

SASSARI is about equidistant from Alghero and Porto-Torres. Of these two ports Alghero is far the best, but all the commerce of Sassari passes through Porto-Torres, by the Strada Reale. The ancient rivalry between the two cities engendered a hatred which continues to the present day, insomuch that the Sassarese have resisted all efforts to make a good road from Alghero, to enable it to become their port of trade. These feuds arose in the age when Alghero was the chief seat of the Arragonese power in the island, enjoyed great exclusive privileges, and was peopled by Catalonian settlers. It is still Spanish in the character of the inhabitants, their customs, and buildings. Surrounded by a fertile and well-cultivated country, abounding in orange and olive groves, vineyards, and fields of corn and flax, Alghero is a city of some seven thousand inhabitants, many of them in affluent circumstances. It is a fortified place, with a richly ornamented cathedral, and thirteen other churches.

Sassari also boasts a spacious cathedral, with a very elaborate façade, a work of the 17th century. It contains also twenty churches, including those that are conventual.

If the religious state of the community were to be estimated by the number of those devoted to the service of the church, the Sassarese ought to be models of piety; for Mr. Tyndale calculates the number of priests and monks in 1840 as giving a total of 769 clerical persons, about one for every thirty-two individuals of the community. Their numbers have been diminished by the suppression of some of the convents, but, even at the time of our visit, his remark, that one cannot walk fifty yards in the street without meeting an ecclesiastic, was confirmed by our own observation.

The object which the Sassarese are most proud to exhibit to strangers, is the fountain of Rosello, outside the north-east or Macella gate. At the angles are large figures of the four seasons, at the feet of which the stream issues forth, as well as from eight lions' mouths in the sides of the building. The whole is of white marble, and though open to criticism as an architectural design, the utility of a fountain, which has twelve mouths constantly pouring forth pure water, in such a climate, cannot be overrated.

The University of Sassari, founded by Philip IV. in 1634, is established in the spacious college formerly belonging to the Jesuits. It numbers about 200 students. The library contains a scanty collection of books, mostly ecclesiastical works. The museum exhibits some few articles of interest, relics of the Phœnician colonisation and Roman occupation of the island, mixed up in the greatest confusion, as in a broker's shop, with meagre specimens of mineralogy and conchology; and cannot for a moment be compared with the museum of Cagliari, rich in valuable remains of antiquity, and admirably arranged. It will be noticed in its proper place.

We were much more interested in being allowed to examine a small private collection belonging to a young Sassarese, whose acquaintance it was our good fortune to make, and of whose talents, intelligence, and courtesy I retain a most pleasing impression. The pursuits of the young men of the higher classes in Sassari, are described as entirely frivolous, and the bent of the bourgeoisie as eminently sordid. It was, therefore, with an agreeable surprise, that we found ourselves in a studio embellished with the portraits of such characters as Dante, Ariosto, and Sir Isaac Newton; and where mathematical instruments, scattered about, and a cabinet containing some of the best French, English, German, and Italian authors, gave a pleasing idea of the tastes of the owner. With imperfect aid he had made himself sufficiently proficient in foreign languages to be able to read them; and it appeared that his severer studies were relieved by accomplishments displaying considerable talent, such as painting, and taking impressions from the antique in electrotype. He was good enough to offer me some of his casts, with a few coins from his museum of antiquities; two engravings from which, illustrating the Punic and Saracenic periods of the history of Sardinia, will appear in future pages, together with one copied from a unique coin of the Roman age, preserved in the Royal Museum at Cagliari.

One seldom finds such talents and accomplishments accompanied by the modesty with which our young student spoke of his pursuits. Nor was he a mere recluse, though his health appeared feeble; for he entered with zest into conversation on the various topics of European interest suggested by a visit from foreigners, while he did not hesitate to expose, with patriotic zeal, the follies and abuses which opposed the march of civilisation in his native

country. Such characters are rare. We had unexpectedly stumbled on a delicate flower, nurtured on an ungrateful soil, and destined to shed its sweetness in an atmosphere where, I fear, it is little appreciated. I may be excused, then, for devoting a page to the adventure, and allowed to inscribe on that page, a name of which I have so agreeable a recollection—that of Carlo Rugiu.

Our new friend was kind enough to be our conductor in a walk to a Nuraghe, standing about three miles from Sassari, and in good preservation. We had already seen many of these very ancient structures scattered over all parts of the country; more or less ruinous, they are said to number 3000 at the present day, and many others have been destroyed.

Whether seen on the plains or on the mountains, the Nuraghe are generally built on the summits of hillocks, or on artificial mounds, commanding the country. Some are partially inclosed at a slight distance by a low wall of similar construction with the building. Their external appearance is that of a truncated cone from thirty to sixty feet in height, and from 100 to 300 in circumference at the base. The walls are composed of rough masses of the stones peculiar to the locality, each from two to six cubic feet, built in regular horizontal layers, in somewhat of the Cyclopean style, and gradually diminishing in size to the summit. Most commonly they betray no marks of the chisel, but in many instances the stones

EXTERIOR OF A NURAGHE.

appear to have been rudely worked by the hammer, though not exactly squared.

The interior is almost invariably divided into two domed chambers, one above the other; the lowest averaging from fifteen to twenty feet in diameter, and from twenty to twenty-five feet in height. Access to the upper chamber is gained by a spiral ramp, or rude steps, between the internal and external walls. These are continued to the summit of the tower, which is generally supposed to have formed a platform; but scarcely any of the Nuraghe now present a perfect apex. On the ground floor, there are generally from two to four cells worked in the solid masonry of the base of the cone.

Independently of the interest attached to the object of our search, the fertile plains surrounding Sassari formed a sufficient attraction for a long walk. Plantations of olives, of vines, oranges, and other fruit-trees, succeeded each other in rich profusion; the olive trees being especially productive, and the oil, exported from Sassari in large quantities, being of the first quality. The environs, far and wide, are laid out in these plantations, and in gardens highly cultivated, interspersed with villas and pleasure-grounds. Tobacco is largely cultivated, and the vegetables are excellent. A cauliflower served up at dinner was of enormous size, nor can I forget the baskets of delicious figs which, at this late period of the year, were brought by the market-women to the door of our hotel.

The Nuraghe to which our steps were directed proved to be a very picturesque object, rising out of a thicket of shrubs, with tufts growing in the crevices of the tower, which on one side was dilapidated. The other, composed of huge boulders, laid horizontally with much precision, considering the rude materials, still preserved its conical

form, rising to the height of twenty or twenty-five feet. The entrance was so low that we were obliged to stoop almost to our knees in passing through it. A lintel, consisting of a single stone, some two tons' weight, was supported by the protruding jambs. No light being admitted to the chamber, but by a low passage through the double walls, it was gloomy enough.

ENTRANCE TO A NURAGHE.

In this instance, the interior formed a single dome or cone about twenty-five feet high, well-proportioned, and diminishing till a single massive stone formed the apex. The chamber was fifteen feet in diameter, and had four recesses or cells worked in the solid masonry, about five feet high, three deep, and nearly the same in breadth.

INTERIOR OF A NURAGHE.

The small platform on the summit of the cone, to which we ascended by the ramp in the interior of the wall and some rugged steps, commanded a rich view of the plain of Sassari, appearing from the top one dense thicket of olive and fruit trees spreading for miles round the city. Out of

these groves rise the towers and domes of Sassari, the enceinte of its grey battlemented walls, and the lofty masses of its white houses. The view over the plain to the west is bounded by the Mediterranean, intersected by the bold outlines of the island of Asinara. After feasting our eyes on perhaps the most charming *tableau* the island affords, decked with nature's choicest gifts, and exhibiting an industry unusual among the modern Sardes, we sat down at the foot of the hillock, while my friend was completing his sketches of the Nuraghe, and our thoughts were naturally drawn to these relics of a primitive age. "What was their origin—their history—what were the purposes for which they were designed?"

It needed only that we should lift our eyes to the rude but shapely cone before us,—massive in its materials and fabric, and yet constructed with some degree of mechanical skill,—to come to the conclusion that the Nuraghe are works of a very early period, just when rude labour had begun to be directed by some rules of geometrical art. But, in examining the details, we find little or nothing to assist us in forming any clear idea of the period at which they were erected, or the purpose for which they were designed. There are not the slightest vestiges of ornament, any rude sculpture, any inscriptions. Of an antiquity probably anterior to all written records, history not only throws no certain light on their origin, but, till modern times, was silent as to their existence. Successive races, and powers, and dynasties have flourished in the island, and passed away, scarcely any of them without leaving some relics, some medals of history, some impress on the manners and character of the people still to be traced. The mouldering cones which arrest the traveller's attention,

scattered, as we have observed, in great numbers throughout the island, enduring in their simple and massive structure, have thrown their shade over Phœnicians and Greeks, Romans and Carthaginians, Saracens, Pisans, Genoese, and Spaniards, and still survive the wreck of time and so many other early buildings,—the remains of a people of whose existence they are the only record, and, except monoliths, the oldest of, at least, European monuments.

In the absence of any positive evidence regarding the origin and design of the Sardinian Nuraghe*, there has been abundance of conjecture and speculation on the subject. On the present occasion, I had the advantage of discussing it with our intelligent Sassarese student, I have also heard the remarks of one of the most distinguished Sarde antiquarians, and having since consulted the works of La Marmora and other writers, whose extensive researches and personal investigations entitle their opinions to much respect, I shall endeavour to lay the result, unsatisfactory

* A passage in Aristotle's work "De Mirabilibus," (chap. 104.) has been supposed to refer to the Nuraghe. The words are these:—"It is said that in the island of Sardinia are edifices of the ancients, erected after the Greek manner, and many other beautiful buildings and *tholi* (domes or cupolas) finished in excellent proportions." Again, Diodorus Siculus informs us (l. iv. c. 29, 30) that "after Iolaus had settled his colony in Sardinia, he sent for Dædalus out of Sicily and employed him in building many and great works which remain to this day." And in another place (l. v. c. 51) he reckons among these works "temples of the gods," of which, he repeats, "the remains exist even in these times." These passages, however, afford but slight grounds for considering that the Nuraghe were built by the Greeks, or even were temples of the gods. The term Θολούς, used by Aristotle, may indeed describe a round building roofed with a dome, but the Nuraghe cannot be considered as corresponding to the Grecian idea of buildings that are "beautiful"—"finished in excellent proportions"—or fitting temples for the gods. Pausanias denies that Dædalus was sent for out of Sicily by Iolaus, and makes it an anachronism. See *Tyndale's Sardinia*, vol. i. p. 116.

as it proves, before the reader, in the shortest compass to which so wide an inquiry can be reduced.

The world has been searched for styles of building corresponding with that of the Sarde Nuraghe; without success. Neither in Etruscan, Pelasgic, or any other European architecture are any such models to be found, nor do Indian, Assyrian, or Egyptian remains exhibit any identity with them. They have been supposed, among other theories, to have some affinity with the Round Towers of Ireland; but after a careful examination of some of those almost equally mysterious structures, and considerable research among the authorities for their antiquity and uses, I have failed to discover anything in common between them and the Nuraghe. If my memory be correct, Mr. Petrie, the highest authority on the subject of the Round Towers, though he had not seen the Nuraghe, incidentally expresses the same opinion. The only existing buildings exhibiting a cognate character with those of Sardinia, are certain conical towers found in the Balearic islands, which were also colonised by the Phœnicians. They are called *talayots*, a diminutive, it is said, of *atalaya*, meaning the "Giants' Burrow;" and if the plate annexed to Father Bresciani's work be a correct representation, they would appear to be identical with the Nuraghe in the exterior, except that the ramp leading to the summit is worked in the outward face of the wall. We find, also, from La Marmora's description of the *talayots* examined by him, that the character of the cells is different, the style of masonry more cyclopean, and that many of them are surrounded with circles of stones and supposed altars, scarcely ever met with in Sardinia. The resemblance, however, is striking, as connected with the facts of the contiguity of Minorca, and the colonisation of both the islands by the Phœnicians.

Opinions as to the purposes for which the Nuraghe were erected are as various as those regarding their origin. From their great number, scattered over the country, they are supposed by some to have been the habitations of the most ancient shepherds; and the words of Micah—"the tower of the flocks,"* and other similar passages, are referred to as supporting this view. But it is hardly necessary to point out that the inconveniences of the structure, from its low entrance and dark interior, to say nothing of the waste of labour in heaping up such vast structures for shepherds' huts, will not admit of the idea being entertained. With somewhat more reason, but still with little probability, they have been represented as watch-towers, strongholds, and places of refuge; a theory to which their position, their numbers, and their structure are all opposed. Another hypothesis treats the Nuraghe as monuments commemorating heroes or great national events, whether in peace or war; forgetting, as Father Bresciani suggests, the centuries that must have elapsed while the mountains, and hills, and plains of Sardinia were being successively crowned with monuments of this description.

Discarding such conjectural theories, the best-informed travellers and writers are agreed in considering the Nuraghe as being designed either for religious edifices or tombs for the dead. La Marmora confesses his inability to pronounce decidedly between the two opinions, but inclines to the opinion that they may have been intended for both purposes. Father Bresciani, the latest writer on Sardinian antiquities, after a personal examination of the Nuraghe and much general research, though he does not venture a

* Micah, iv. 8; and see 2 Kings, x. 12, xvii. 9, xviii. 8; and 2 Chron. xxvi. 10, &c.

decided opinion, is disposed to agree with La Marmora. In confirmation of the idea that the most ancient monuments were at once tombs and altars, he quotes a Spanish writer * on the antiquities of Mexico, referring also to Lord Kingsborough's splendid work. So general an assumption is hardly warranted either by historical testimony or existing relics of antiquity. If such were the primitive custom, it did not prevail among the Greeks and Romans, and it is in the rites and practices of the Christian Church that we find its revival.

However this may be, the theory not only of the twofold design or use of the Nuraghe, but of either of them, is confessedly quite conjectural: it rests upon a narrow basis of facts. Though a great number of the Nuraghe have been carefully ransacked, in very few instances only have human bones been discovered, but neither urns, arms, nor ornaments usually inhumed with the dead; nor are many of them so constructed as to permit the supposition that they were designed for sepulchral purposes. Occasionally, also, some of the miniature idols, such as are preserved in the museum at Cagliari, have been found buried in Nuraghe, or their precincts. But this is not general; and there are neither altars nor any other indications in the structure of the buildings to indicate their appropriation to religious uses, except their pyramidal or conical form, which they share in common with most buildings of the earliest age. So far as these were designed for idolatrous uses—as many of them doubtless were—the argument from analogy may apply to the Nuraghe, but it can be carried no further.

* "*Apenas se diferenciaba el* ARA de la TUMBA.

"*La graderia* (del monumento sepolcrale) *se hallaba practicada en el costade occidental per donde se subia para* ORAR, *o para* SACRIFICAR."—Dupaix, vol. v. p. 243. 261.

Whatever were the purposes of the Nuraghe, almost all writers on Sardinia consider these ancient structures of Eastern origin. Father Bresciani attributes them to Canaanitish or Phœnician colonies, which migrated to the west in early times; and he takes great pains, but, I consider, without much success, to establish their identity, or, at least, their analogy, with the religious or sepulchral erections,—the altars, and "high places," and tombs,—of which notices are found in the Old Testament. No doubt exists that extensive migrations, favoured by the enterprise of the earliest maritime people of whom we have any record, took place, perhaps both before and after the age of Moses, from the shores of Syria to the islands and shores of the West of Europe. There is reason to think that the island of Sardinia, if not the first seat, was, from its peculiar situation, the very centre, of a colonisation, embracing in its ramifications the coasts of Africa and Spain, with Malta, Sicily, and the Balearic islands. It appears singular that Corsica, the sister island to Sardinia, should not have shared in this movement of settlers from the East; perhaps from its lying out of the direct current, while, in its onward course, the wave flowing through the Straits of Hercules bore forward on the ocean the "merchants of many isles," for commerce if not for settlement, as far as the Cassiterides, our own Scilly Isles.

Though there is little historical evidence of the Phœnician colonisation of Sardinia, and even that of the early Greek settlements in the island is obscure and conflicting, we have abundant traces of the former, more imperishable than written records, still lingering in the manners and customs of the modern Sardes, and in the great number of those extraordinary antiquities known as the Sarde idols.

The greater part of these, as Mr. Tyndale undertakes to show, were symbols of Canaanitish worship, the miniature representations of the gods adored by the Syrian nations, especially of Moloch, Baal, Astarte or Astaroth, Adonis or Tammuz, the very objects of that idolatry so frequently and emphatically denounced in the Old Testament, to which we have already referred. Mr. Tyndale, however, justly observes, that "so distinct and peculiar is the character of these relics, that their counterparts are no more to be met with out of Sardinia than the Nuraghe themselves." From this circumstance, in conjunction with the fact of the images being often found in and near those buildings, he infers that they may have been, directly or indirectly, connected with each other, in either a religious, sepulchral, or united character.

The inquiry would be incomplete unless it were extended to other Sarde remains, of equal or greater antiquity, for the purpose of discovering whether they have any affinity with, or can throw any light on, the mysterious origin of the Nuraghe. We propose devoting another chapter to this investigation.

CHAP. XXXV.

Sardinian Monoliths. — The Sepolture, or "Tombs of the Giants." — Traditions regarding Giant Races. — The Anakim, &c., of Canaan. — Their supposed Migration to Sardinia. — Remarks on Aboriginal Races. — Antiquity of the Nuraghe and Sepolture. — Their Founders unknown.

We can hardly be mistaken in supposing that, among the relics of antiquity still existing in Sardinia, the monoliths, of somewhat similar character with the Celtic remains at Carnac, Avebury, and Stonehenge, and common also in other countries, belong to the earliest age. These Sarde monoliths are found in several parts of the island, being, as the name expresses, single stones, or obelisks, set upright in the ground. In Sardinia they are called *Pietra-* or *Perda-fitta*, and *Perda-Lunga*. We generally find them rounded by the hammer, but irregularly, in a conical form tapering to the top, but with a gradual swell in the middle; and their height varies from six to eighteen feet. They differ from the Celtic monuments, in being generally thus worked and shaped; in not being often congregated on one spot beyond three in number—a *Perda-Lunga* with two lesser stones; and in there not being any appearance of their ever having had, like the Trilithons of Stonehenge, any impost horizontal stone.

Father Bresciani finds the prototype of all these rude

pillars scattered throughout the world, in the Beth-El of Jacob and other Bethylia, sepulchral or commemorative, mentioned in the Hebrew Scriptures. By Mr. Tyndale, the Sarde *Perda-Lunga* is considered a relic of the religion common to all the idolatrous Syro-Arabian nations, which, deifying the powers and laws of nature, considers the male sex to be the type of its active, generative, and destructive powers, while that passive power of nature, whose function is to conceive and bring forth, is embodied under the female form. And this worship, he conceives, was introduced into Sardinia, with the symbols just described, by the Phœnician or Canaanitish immigrants.

The *Sepolture de is Gigantes*, the tombs of the giants, as they are called, form another class of Sarde antiquities of the earliest age. The structures to which the popular traditions ascribe this name, may be described as a series of large stones placed together without any cement, inclosing a foss or hollow from fifteen to thirty-six feet long, from three to six wide, and the same in depth, with immense flat stones resting on them as a covering. Though the latter are not always found, it is evident, by a comparison with the more perfect Sepolture, that they have once existed, and have been destroyed or removed.*

SEPOLTURA DE IS GIGANTES.

The foss runs invariably from north-west to south-east;

* We borrow this description from Mr. Tyndale's work, as well as the illustrations, not finding a sketch of a Sepoltura in our own portfolio.

and at the latter point there is a large upright headstone, averaging from ten to fifteen feet high, varying in its form, from the square, elliptical, and conical, to that of three-fourths of an egg; and having in many instances an aperture about eighteen inches square at its base.

On each side of this stele, or headstone, commences a series of separate stones, irregular in size and shape, but forming an arc, the chord of which varies from twenty to twenty-six feet; so that the whole figure somewhat resembles the bow and shank of a spur.

SEPOLTURA DE IS GIGANTES.

"The shape of the foss and headstone," observes Mr. Tyndale, "of these remains, fairly admits of the probability that they were graves, as some of the earliest forms of sepulchres on record are the upright stones with superincumbent slabs, such as the Druidical cistvaens and some tombs in Greece. Still, like the 'Sarde Idols' and the Nuraghe, the *Sepolture* are peculiar to the island, being entirely different in point of size and character from any other sepulchral remains. Judging from the many remains of those partially destroyed, their numbers must have been considerable. The Sardes believe them to be veritable tombs of giants; and that there may be legends of their existence in the island is undeniable, as a similar belief is found in almost all countries." Mr. Tyndale, in speaking of the supposed connexion between the *Nuraghe* and the *Sepolture*, observes that, "if a Canaanitish race

migrated here, nothing is more probable than that the tradition and worship of the giants would be also imported; and that it is even possible that some of the actual gigantic races of the Rephaim, Anakim, and others mentioned in Scripture, might have actually arrived in Sardinia." Father Bresciani goes further: he fixes the era of this migration, points out the event which caused it *, and traces its route by the Isthmus of Suez, through Egypt, and along the coast of Africa, which they are also said to have colonised; and whence he considers they could easily navigate to Sardinia and other islands in that part of the Mediterranean.

This immigration, however, of the Canaanitish giants rests upon very slender evidence; and it may be questioned whether the oldest Sardinian monuments do not belong to an age far anterior to that of any Phœnician or Canaanitish colonisation of the island whatever. That such there was, undoubted proofs have already been gathered; but the statuettes of Phœnician idols, forming part of those proofs, with the arts and skill required for the maritime enterprise it required, betray the civilisation of a period more ad-

* The learned Jesuit disconnects this migration from the expulsion of the Canaanitish tribes by the Israelites under Joshua, considering it to have occurred from one to two centuries before, when the giant tribes east of Jordan were subdued by the Moabites and Amorites, who succeeded to their possessions. Moses relates that "the Emims dwelt therein [that is, in Moab,] in times past, a people great, and many, and tall, as the Anakims; which also were accounted giants, as the Anakims; but the Moabites call them Emims." Of Ammon, Moses says:—"That also was accounted a land of giants: giants dwelt therein in old time; and the Ammonites call them Zamzummims; a people great, and many, and tall, as the Anakims; but the Lord destroyed them before them; and they succeeded them, and dwelt in their stead even unto this day."—*Deut.* ii. 10, 11. 20, 21.

vanced than that to which we should be disposed to attribute such rude structures as the Nuraghe and the Sepolture. In this uncertainty, it may be worth an inquiry, whether these ancient monuments did not exist before the colonists landed on the shores of Sardinia,—in short, whether they were not the works of an aboriginal race. The question is raised by M. Tyndale: "We may reduce the inquiry," he says, "to the simple question, Were the Nuraghe built by the autochthones of the island, of whom we have no knowledge, or by the earliest colonists, of whom we have but little information?" On the former alternative the author is silent; nor is the question even raised by any other writer on Sardinian antiquities within our knowledge.

Yet surely, independently of its bearing on the origin of the Nuraghe and the early population of Sardinia, the subject of indigenous races is interesting in a general point of view. And it is worthy of notice, that the accounts handed down to us of the earliest colonists of the ancient world, speak of an aboriginal population existing in the countries to which they migrated, just as the European adventurers and circumnavigators of the last three centuries found indigenous races on the continents and islands they discovered, except on some few islands of the Pacific Ocean, recently emerged from the state of coral reefs. The parallel may be carried further. The ancient, as well as the modern, colonists carried the arts of a superior civilisation in their train; but the indigenous races of the New World were destined to gradual decay and extinction, leaving some ancient monuments as the records of their existence, just as the primitive children of the soil in the West of Europe, whose relics we endeavour to decipher,

disappeared and were lost; so uniform is the order of events in the designs of Providence.

Poetical legends, generally founded on, and blended with, traditionary facts, help us to form some idea of the character and habits of the aboriginal races; but history, and even tradition, seldom carry us further back in the review of past ages than the arrival of colonists, generally of Eastern origin, to form settlements on the shores and the islands washed by the Mediterranean. Did they find these shores and islands uninhabited? To say nothing of countries more remote and less accessible, many considerations would induce us to imagine that these fair regions were not all deserts; that, even at this early period, they were already peopled.

In Sardinia, where, as already observed, the manners, the superstitions, and the traditions of the earliest ages, are more faithfully preserved than in any other European country, we find, among the most ancient existing structures, some which, to this day, are pointed out by the natives as "the Tombs of the Giants." And who were the "giants," of whom we read much, both in sacred and profane history? The very term is significant. It is formed from two Greek words — γῆ and γένω, and signifies earth-born, sons of the earth.* The word αὐτόχθονες (autochthones) has a cognate meaning; Liddell and Scott render it, "of the land itself; Latin, *terrigenæ*, *aborigines*, *indigenæ*, of the original race, *not settlers*." The mythical account of the origin of the "giants" concurs with this etymology. It paints them as the sons of Cœlus and

* Οὓς καλέουσι Γίγαντας, ἐπώνυμον ἐν μακάροισι
Οὕνεκα γῆς ἐγενόντο καὶ αἵματος οὐρανίοιο. ORPHEUS.

Terra — Heaven and Earth. In the poetry of Hesiod, they spring from the earth imbued with the blood of the gods. Traces and traditions of this aboriginal race are found in all parts of the world, and in sacred as well as profane history. We are told that there were giants in the days before the flood*; and Josephus considers them the offspring of the union, mysteriously described by the sacred writer, of "the sons of God with the daughters of men;" for, as might be supposed, there were females also of the race of the earth-born. So the poets sang. Such was Cybele, daughter of Heaven and Earth, pictured as crowned with a diadem of towers, as the patroness of builders. We read of the giants, in the Old Testament, under the names of Rephaim, Emim, Zamzummim, and Anakim. In the time of Abraham, these tribes dwelt in the country beyond Jordan, in about Astaroth-Karnaim†, and it is now the received opinion of biblical archæologists, that they were the most ancient, or aboriginal, inhabitants of Palestine; prior to the Canaanites, by whom they were gradually dispossessed of the region west of the Jordan, and driven beyond that river. Some of the race, however, remained in Palestine Proper so late as the invasion of the land by the Hebrews, and are repeatedly mentioned as "the sons of Anak," and "the remnant of the Rephaim;"‡ and a few families existed as late as the time of David.§

In the most ancient legends we find the giant race

* Gen. vi. 1—4.

† These giant tribes were defeated by Chedorlaomer and the kings allied with him, in the same expedition in which the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah were put to the sword, and Lot, who dwelt in Sodom, was carried off, but afterwards rescued by Abraham. Numbers, xiv. 5. &c.

‡ Numb. xiii. 33.; Deut. iii. 11., ix. 2.; Josh. xv. 14.

§ 1 Sam. xvii. 4.; 2 Sam. xxi. 16—22.

located in all parts of the then known world. In Thessaly, under the name of Titans, poetic fiction records their deeds of prowess in piling mountain on mountain, and hurling immense rocks in their battles with the gods. Writers of credit have transmitted to us accounts of the discovery of their remains on the coast of Africa, from Bona to Tangier, in Sicily, and in Crete. The earliest navigators who touched on the shores and islands of the Mediterranean, brought back romantic tales, receiving their colouring from the terrors of the narrators, of the barbarity and the stature of the races they found on those then inhospitable shores. They were robbers, and even cannibals; 'enemies of the gods and men. Such tales are not without their parallels in the annals of modern maritime discovery.

Before the fall of Troy, Sicily was peopled by a giant or aboriginal people, called Cyclopes; that insular race being said to be descended from Neptune and Amphitrite, just as the giant Antæus, the founder of Tangier on the African coast, was called the son of Neptune and Terra. If we take Polyphemus, the chief of a tribe of the Cyclops, for a type of this cognate race, what do we find in his story, divested of the fiction with which it was clothed by tradition, transmuted into the poetry of the Odyssey and the Æneid? The Grecian and Trojan heroes, successively land on the eastern coast of Sicily, near the base of Mount Ætna, whose throes and thunders lend horror to the scene. There dwelt this Cyclop chief, in a cavern of the rocks. The race were Troglodytes, as were the aboriginal Sardes, Baleares, Maltese, Libyans, &c. In Sardinia, their caverns are still to be seen in an island of the territory of Sulcis. Caves were probably the first habitations of primitive man, before emerging from a condition hardly superior to that of the savage beasts, his competitors for

such rude shelter. Irrespective of climate, in these we find his home, whether among the Celts of the frozen regions of the North, or the Arabs of the stony wastes bordering on the Erythrean Sea, in the Libyan deserts, or in the sandstone rocks of Southern Africa. There one still sees the pygmy Bushmen, perhaps the last existing Troglodyte race, the very reverse of the Cyclops in stature, but, like them, their hand against every man's, unchanged by ages in the midst of African tribes of considerable civilisation, neither sowing nor pasturing, but living on roots, berries, and grubs, like other aboriginal races, which sprang into existence with the forests through which they roam, and the various brutes which shared with them the possession of the soil:

"Cum prorepserunt primis animalia terris,
Mutum et turpe pecus." HOR. *Sat.* i. 3.

But the traditions of Polypheme and his Cyclops represent them as advanced beyond this first rude stage of society, though they still adhered to their ancestral caves. They were robbers, no doubt; at least, they plundered and made captive unfortunate mariners thrown on their shores. Perhaps they feasted on their captives, as American Indians and South-Sea islanders are reported to have done. This may be doubted; but at least the cannibal feasts of the Sicilian aborigines were but *bonnes bouches* occasionally thrown in their way. They had better means of subsistence. Polypheme was a shepherd, and so were all his clan. Picture him, as described by Virgil*, descending from the

* . . . . . "Summo cum monte videmus
Ipsum, inter pecudes vastâ se mole moventem,
Pastorem Polyphemum, et littora nota petentem.
. . . . . .
Trunca manum pinus regit, et vestigia firmat.
Lanigeræ comitantur oves; . . . .
. . . . de collo fistula pendet." *Æn.* iii. 655, &c.

mountains, probably at eventide, leaning on his staff, with his shepherd's pipe hanging on his bosom, surrounded by his flocks, and leading them to the shelter of some cavern on the shore; and we have a pleasant scene of pastoral life. Such were all his tribe, a pretty numerous one, comprising one hundred males, with their families, each having a flock as large as their chief's. They led a nomad life, "*errantes*" between the mountain pastures and the plains on the coast.*

Now, if we may be allowed to separate these facts, which seem genuine, from the fictions with which they are blended, we find the aborigines of Sicily, though barbarous, in a somewhat advanced stage of social life beyond that when we are told they roamed in the woods and fed on acorns. Such we may justly presume, divested of poetical fiction, was the condition of the aborigines of the neighbouring island of Sardinia, the largest in the Mediterranean except Sicily, when the first foreign colonists landed on its coast. And such, after the lapse of more than thirty centuries, are the Sarde shepherds of the present day, generally lawless, sometimes robbers, making the caves of the rocks their shelter, and their flocks and herds providing them with food and clothing. Tenacious, above all other European races, of the traditions and customs of their forefathers, when they point to structures of the highest antiquity scattered on their native soil, and call them "*Sepolture de is Gigantes*," — as we now have

* Polypheme's clan are thus described: —

"Nam, qualis quantusque cavo Polyphemus in antro
Lanigeras claudit pecudes, atque ubera pressat,
Centum alii curva hæc habitant ad littora vulgo
Infandi Cyclopes, et altis montibus errant." *Æn.* iii. 641.

some idea what these giants were, — may we not find reason to accept their tradition, and consider these monuments as the tombs of the chiefs and first founders of their aboriginal race.

Still, it may be objected that the ancient legends relating to giants are too fabulous to admit of any sound theories being built on them; and some have even gone so far as to reject all the received accounts of families or tribes of men of gigantic stature, as worthy only of the belief of credulous ages. It may indeed be difficult to imagine whole districts and countries peopled with gigantic races so formidable that we can hardly conceive any other people subsisting in contact with them. But that individuals, and even families, of extraordinary stature and strength existed in the earliest ages cannot be denied, except by those who regard the narrative of Scripture as equally fabulous with the fictions of the poets; although the statements are literal and exact, occur in a variety of incidental notices, and are confirmed by discoveries related by authors of good repute.*

A solution of the difficulty may, perhaps, be found in the consideration, that, as even now we find families and races exceeding in stature and strength the average of mankind, there is still more reason to believe in the existence of such phenomena in the youth of the generations of man, when a simple mode of life, abundance of nutritious food, and a salubrious atmosphere, gave to all organic beings large and sinewy forms. Such might be the special privilege of the Rephaim, and other tribes of which we read.

* Father Bresciani has collected all the authorities for the existence of giant races, with great diligence, in the course of his remarks on the Sarde Sepolture. Vol. i. p. 89, &c.

But while the rank and file, as we may call them, of the nation, though tall and robust, might not much exceed the average height of the human species, the chiefs and heroes who took their posts in the van of battle may have attained the extraordinary dimensions recorded of them; and, their numbers being magnified by terror and tradition, the attributes of the class were extended to the whole tribe. Thus the poets gave the name of Cyclops to all the aboriginal inhabitants of Sicily, though the Cyclops, properly so called, are represented by them as a single family, sons, as before mentioned, of Neptune and Amphitrite.

That the *Sepolture de is Gigantes* may be considered the tombs of the chiefs or heroes of the aboriginal inhabitants of Sardinia seems to be generally allowed; and the opinion receives some confirmation from a passage in Aristotle's "Physics," where, treating of the immutability of time, notwithstanding our perception or unconsciousness of what occurs, he incidentally illustrates his argument by the expression: — "So with those who are fabulously said to sleep with the heroes in Sardinia, when they shall rise up." *

The best authorities being thus led to the conclusion that the Sarde aborigines were a giant race, the question remains whether the Nuraghe had the same origin as the Sepolture; and, passing by some trivial objections to this hypothesis, we are disposed to adopt Mr. Tyndale's conclusion, that—"the coincidence of two such peculiar monuments in the same island, their non-existence elsewhere, and their being both indicative of some abstract principle of grandeur and power, practically carried out in their

* De Physicis, iv. 3.

construction, are strong reasons for the presumption that they may have had some mutual reference to each other, —as burying places, temples, and altars, and consequently were works of the same times and the same people."

Perhaps it may be objected, with some show of reason, that a people so rude and so primitive as the aborigines, could not have possessed the skill required for the construction of such buildings as the Nuraghe; so that they must be assigned to a later age. But we are informed in Genesis that, among some families of mankind, not only useful, but ornamental, arts were taught before Noah's flood!* and, without instituting an inquiry how soon the inventive and mechanical faculties of mankind were more or less developed in various countries, we may venture to assume that, before the historical period, before navigation had conveyed the higher arts of civilisation to distant shores, the aboriginal races, generally, were not incapable of erecting the massive structures attributed to them by universal tradition, and which, defying the ravages of time, still remain the sole monuments of lost races, on which the puzzled antiquary can hope to decipher the records of their existence and condition.

To rear the lofty perpendicular monolith, to set up the tall stele as the headstone of a grave, to lift and poise the ponderous rocking-stone, to raise and fix the massive impost of the trilithon, or the slab covering a sepoltura, a cromlech, or a cistvaen; (for the remark applies to Celtic as well as Mediterranean antiquities), to heap up, not Pelion on Ossa, but untold loads of earth and stone to form the conical tumulus over the chambers of the dead, to

* Gen. iv. 21, 22.

build "Cyclopean" walls, and construct the cone of rude but solid masonry, with its cavernous recesses,—all these are the works we should just expect from races of mankind when emerging from primitive barbarism, in the youth of the species, and possessed of enormous strength of limb.* Those who reared these works are supposed to have been in possession of some knowledge of the pulley, the lever, and the incline; but, after all, giant strength must have been the main fulcrum for such operations. Had there been ornament, sculpture, or inscriptions on these primeval monuments, our thoughts might have been carried forward to a later age, when colonisation from the East brought in its train the arts which there first undoubtedly flourished.

That the Sardinian antiquities of the earliest age are unique, that this is the case in other parts of the world, every primitive people having, with certain resemblances, a peculiar style in its ancient monuments, that none such as these are found in the countries from whence the first colonists migrated, nor are described in their records, are facts strengthening the argument for their being of indigenous origin. That the forms of these structures scattered over the world are generally pyramidal, often rounded,

* A general idea seems to have prevailed in early times of the prodigious muscular strength possessed by the men of an age still earlier. Thus Turnus, the warlike chief of the Rutuli, is represented in the Æneid as lifting and hurling at the Trojan an immense boundary stone which would defy the united efforts of *twelve such men as the earth produced in those days* to lift on their shoulders.

> "Saxum antiquum, ingens, campo quod forte jacebat,
> Limes agro positus, litem ut discerneret arvis.
> Vix illud lecti bis sex cervice subirent,
> Qualia nunc hominum producit corpora tellus." *Æn.* xii. 897.

and sometimes spiral, tells nothing to the contrary. The cone, as Father Bresciani observes, was more graceful to the eye, more easy of construction, more durable, and, perhaps, connected with some mysterious ideas of Eternity, or the circling course of the heavenly bodies. Such was the form of the first great building on record, the Tower of Babel, as we have it represented; the type in many respects of the Sarde Nuraghe. Nor is it an unreasonable conjecture that the alien people, mysteriously alluded to in Genesis, as mixing with the children of God, having seduced the most froward of the chosen race, were the instigators and planners of the profane enterprise. "Go to —," said a man to his neighbour, as the marginal translation renders the passage, — "let us make bricks, let us build a tower whose top may reach to heaven." *

"There were giants in those days,"— men not only of gigantic forms, but imbued with grand ideas. The structures included among the number of their monuments are, as just observed, "indicative of some abstract principle of grandeur and power, practically carried out in their construction." In the strength of their might, the Titanic race bade defiance to the deities of Olympus, with whom they are poetically represented as combating; but that does not preclude our supposing that, in common with all the generations of man, however barbarous, the giant races had their religious instincts, their altars, their rites. Reverence, also, for the memories of their departed heroes, of their progenitors, was a common feeling, most powerful in the earliest times. In these two principles we trace the ideas to which the mysterious monuments of the ancient

* Gen. xi. 4.

Sardes owe their origin, and thence we arrive at a reasonable conclusion respecting their object and uses.

Researches the most extended and the most profound, have failed to penetrate the obscurity in which the mists of ages have enveloped the origin of the primeval monuments of all nations, and of the people who founded them. Something may have been contributed towards the solution of the difficulties surrounding the subject, if we have been able to connect existing monuments with a rude race of extraordinary strength, the supposed giant-builders of those ancient structures. Such buildings we discover in various parts of the world, varying in their details, but similar as respects their simple but massive and durable forms. Gigantic stature and strength of limb we consider to have been the essential requisites, in the infancy of art, for transporting and raising the ponderous materials; and these properties were characteristics of the races of which, and of their Herculean labours, we find everywhere corresponding traditions.

In the absence of a satisfactory reply to the inquiry, whence, when, or how the giant race reached Sardinia, we are willing to accept the alternative, as regards the founders of the Nuraghe and its other ancient monuments, that these structures were the work of the autocthonoi, the aboriginal inhabitants. But we embrace the theory in a different sense from that in which it is proposed; suggesting that the so-called giants themselves may have been the autocthonoi, and not immigrants; and the remark is generally applicable. The etymology of the words used by the Greeks and Romans, to designate the aboriginal races, supports the conjecture of their identity; for, as

already shown*, the term "giant" (γίγας) is not descriptive of extraordinary strength, but, equally with the phrases *autocthonoi, terrigenæ*, and *aborigines*, signifies "the earth-born," the natives of the soil.

Further than this we cannot here pursue the inquiry. In a work of this description, it would be idle to speculate on the means by which aboriginal races, as well as a peculiar fauna and flora, were planted in distant lands, whether islands or remote continents, on which they have been found established by colonists and navigators, from the earliest to the latest times. Ethnologists have laboured to solve the difficulties surrounding the subject; with what success, those who have studied their works must decide for themselves.

The Sardinian Nuraghe are probably among the oldest structures in the world, and may therefore be reasonably considered the works of an aboriginal race; but their origin, and that of the founders, are equally involved in impenetrable mystery. Their rude, but massive and shapely, cones have survived the ruin of the sumptuous edifices of Babylon and Nineveh, of Ecbatana and Susa, of Tyre and the Egyptian Thebes. Like the pyramids of Egypt, they have witnessed, from their hoary tops, the current of untold centuries rolling onwards, wave after wave, in its turbid course. They have marked the rise and the fall of empires, the vicissitudes of fortune, the illusory hopes, the vain fears, and the insatiable desires of successive generations of men, whose brief span of existence has been that of a moment compared with the centuries that

* See before, p. 394.

have looked down from their summits. But unlike the Pyramids, whose mysteries are partially unveiled, they give no note by which their age or their history may be discovered. Mute on their solitary mounds, they give no answer to the inquiries of the traveller or the learned, when questioned,—what people of Herculean strength and undaunted will reared their massive walls, wrought the dark cells under the cover of their domes, and raised the ponderous slab which crowns the cone? No image of man, no form of beast, neither symbol nor inscription, are sculptured or graven on the solid blocks, within or without, to tell their tale. Well, then, may the thoughtful traveller, contemplating with silent wonder these mysterious cones, soliloquise in some such sort as this:—"Surely these structures must have been raised before men had learned the arts of writing and engraving, for how many thousands of the Nuraghe were built, in successive periods, without their founders having acquired the faculty of inscribing on them the name of a god or a hero, for a memorial to future generations."

CHAP. XXXVI.

Oristano.— Orange-groves of Milis.—Cagliari.—Description of.— The Cathedral and Churches.— Religious Laxity.— Ecclesiastical Statistics.— Vegetable and Fruit Market.— Royal Museum.—Antiquities.—Coins found in Sardinia.— Phœnician Remains.— The Sarde Idols.

THE high road between Sassari and Cagliari, called the *Strada Reale*, runs through the great level of the Campidano for a distance of 140 miles, and as there is a daily communication between the two cities by the well-appointed *diligences* already mentioned, the journey, unlike others in Sardinia, is performed with comfort and rapidity. But, whatever he may gain by the exchange, the traveller will hardly bid adieu to the mountains and forest-paths of the Gallura and Barbagia without regret.

About half way, stands Oristano, an old city, of some 6000 inhabitants, with some of the Spanish character of Alghero. Though fallen from its former importance, the place is still wealthy, and, in some degree, commercial. It is, however, deserted in the summer and autumn, when the atmosphere becomes so pestilential from the inhalations of the neighbouring stagna and lagunes as to justify the proverb :—

A Oristano che ghe và,
In Oristano ghe resta!

The most striking object in the place is the belfry of the cathedral, a detached octangular tower, roofed with a pear-shaped dome, of coloured tiles, and commanding from the summit a fine view of the plains from the sea to the distant mountains. The orange groves of Milis, a village lying a little out of the high road to Oristano, are worth a visit. The trees are considered the finest in Europe. I have never seen orange trees that will bear comparison with them in any part of the world, except on some of the Dutch farms in the Cape colony, where they are still more magnificent; vying in size with the European oaks, planted, probably at the same time, by the German settlers from the Black Forest, the disbanded soldiers of the States of Holland, to whom many of the African Boers owe their origin. Such orange groves, when loaded with blossoms and fruit, glowing in the shade of their dense masses of glossy deep-green foliage, are perhaps the most charming of vegetable productions. No idea of their richness and beauty can be formed from the dwarf, round-topped trees, one sees in most orange districts. Here, as in South Africa, they owe their luxuriance to abundant irrigation. Some of the trees at Milis are from thirty-five to forty feet high, and there are said to be 300,000 of them of full growth. The annual produce is estimated at from fifty to sixty millions of fruit, and, being in great repute for their quality, they are conveyed to Sassari and Cagliari, and all parts of the island, the price varying from $1\frac{1}{2}d.$ to $4\frac{3}{4}d.$ per dozen, according to circumstances.

Cagliari, the capital of Sardinia, a city containing upwards of 35,000 inhabitants, is seen to most advantage when approached from the sea, the campagna in the vicinity being neither fertile nor picturesque. Standing at

the head of a noble bay or gulf, twenty-four miles in depth and twelve across, with good anchorage everywhere, its advantageous position pointed out Cagliari as a seat of commerce from the earliest times. The Phœnicians, the Greeks, and Carthaginians were attracted by the fine harbour, and the inducements offered by the neighbouring heights for the construction of a fortified town. The Romans made it the chief seat of their rule in the island. The port, called the Darsena, is capable of containing more than all the shipping at present frequenting it, with such a depth of water that, while I was at Cagliari, one of the largest steamships in the royal Sardinian navy lay alongside the quay.

In the view from the gulf, the eye first rests on the upper town, surrounded with walls and towers, and crowning the summit of a hill upwards of 400 feet above the level of the sea. At the base of the heights lie the suburbs of the Marina, Stampace, and Villanova, the former occupying the space between the Castello, or Casteddu, as the whole circuit of the fortified town is called, and the port; and, with the two other suburbs, on the east and west of the Marina, forming one long continuous line of irregular buildings. In our *tableau*, the Casteddu towers proudly over the lower town, which has grown up beneath it since the Middle Ages. It still retains its original importance, containing all the principal public buildings, and being the residence of the government officials, and, in short, the aristocratic quarter. The best houses in the Marina are occupied by the foreign consuls and persons engaged in commerce, so that there is a marked distinction between the upper and lower parts of the city.

Besides a strong citadel, there are, in the circuit of the fortifications three massive towers, called the Elephant, the Lion, and the Eagle, built by the Pisans; and the Castello is entered by four arched and embattled gateways. One of these was in the act of being demolished during my recent visit to Cagliari, in order to afford freer communication between the upper town and the Marina. Its removal seemed emblematic of an improving state of society, tending to level the barriers of caste, and engage the rising generation of the privileged orders in pursuits calculated as much for their own benefit as the development of the resources with which Sardinia abounds.

Easy access to the Casteddu is gained by a circuitous avenue cut on the sloping side of the hill and under the escarped heights. Being planted with trees, it forms a pleasant walk, commanding extensive views of the Campidano, the distant mountains, and the Gulf of Cagliari. The direct ascent from the Marina is steep and toilsome, it being gained by a series of narrow avenues and flights of steps, landing in streets running parallel with that side of the Castello. These also are narrow as well as lofty, like those of most fortified places in the south of Europe. Here we find the best shops; and the thoroughfares have a busy appearance, except in the heat of the day, when most of the inhabitants indulge in the *siesta*.

The cathedral, standing in the heart of the Castello, was built by the Pisans with part of the remains of a basilica founded by Constantine. It is on a grand scale, having three naves, and a presbytery ascended by several ranges of steps. The church is embellished with fine marbles, and the ornaments being rich, with some good pictures and grand monuments, the effect, on the whole, is striking.

A crypt hewn out of the solid rock, under the presbytery, is regarded with great reverence by the Sardes, as containing the supposed remains of two hundred martyrs removed there from the church of St. Saturninus, in 1617.

Among the fifty-two churches in the Castello and the suburbs, I will only mention that of St. Augustine, attached to which is the oratory built by himself during a short visit to the island. A story is told of one of the beams for the roof proving too short; upon which the saint, quoting to the workmen the text declaring that to those who have faith all things are possible, ordered them to pull at one end while he took the other, when, scarcely touching it, the beam stretched to the required length. St. Augustine's remains were transported here in 505, from Hippo-Regius, where he died, by the Catholic bishops exiled from Africa by Thrasamond, king of the Vandals.* The Chronicles inform us that these bishops, two hundred and twenty in number, were sustained by the benevolence of Pope Symmachus, a native of Sardinia, who sent them every year money and clothes. St. Augustine's relics remained at Cagliari till 722, when Luitprand, king of the Lombards, in consequence of the danger to which they were constantly exposed by the invasions of the Saracens, obtained them from the Cagliarese, and carrying them to Pavia deposited them in the duomo of that city, where they rested, till in 1842, these were restored to Hippo by the French.†

The church of the Jesuits, at Cagliari, is described as distinguished among the others for the sumptuousness of its style, and its decorations of coloured marbles and columns. It was closed, with the adjoining college, at

* *Ordericus Vitalis*, vol. i. p. 113. (Bohn's Antiq. Library.)

† Ib. vol. i. pp. 130. 338; ii. 149.

the time of my visit. The Jesuits formerly possessed large estates, and had colleges in several of the principal towns of the island. The whole were suppressed long ago; but in 1823, the late king, Carlo Felice, partially restored and re-endowed the order, some of the monks being re-established in the college of Cagliari. Of late years, there seems to have been a considerable reaction in the temper of the Sardes as regards religion, at least, in the towns. No people were more bigoted, more priest-ridden, more credulous of the absurdest superstitions. But in a conversation I recently had on the subject with a very intelligent and well-informed friend in the island, he assured me that the utmost laxity now prevails in the religious sentiments of the people. They have lost all respect for the clergy, calling them *bottégaie*, shopkeepers, as mindful only of the gains of their trade; and the churches *bottége*, shops. There is no vitality in the religion of the people, the services are a mere mummery, and the system is held together principally by the attractions of the popular *festas*, such as those described in a former chapter as scenes of bacchanalian revelry tricked out in the paraphernalia of religion. As for the Jesuits, the most obnoxious of the ecclesiastics, my friend stated, that the populace of Cagliari "burnt them out," intending, I apprehend, to convey that they were violently expelled.

In earlier visits to the Continent, and reflecting on the subject at home, the question had often occurred whether, with advancing intelligence, and growing aspirations for civil and religious liberty, the people of Catholic countries might not be drawn, in the course of events, to a movement similar to that of our own Reformation of the Church in the 16th century; the ruling powers, as then,

taking the lead, and emancipating their States from the papal yoke. Thus, while abuses and gross doctrinal errors were reformed, the exterior frame of the establishment, its hierarchy, ceremonial, privileges and property would remain intact; the whole system being so arranged as to be brought into harmony with the action of government, and to meet the demands of an enlightened age. Why should there not be more reformed national and independent churches?

In this view, when conversing with foreigners of intelligence, I have often pointed out the distinction between the Anglican Church and the "Evangelical" and other Protestant communities abroad. Such a reform would seem to be well suited to answer the wants of the kingdom of Sardinia in the present state of her relations with the Court of Rome. It would consolidate the fabric of the constitutional government; and we may conceive that the cabinet of Turin, and perhaps the king, are enlightened enough to be sensible of its advantages.

But it may well be doubted whether the masses of the population, in either that or any other Catholic country, are ripe for such a revolution. In this age of reason, the dogmas which formed the war-cries of Luther and Calvin have lost their influence on the minds of men, and, except in some sections of the various religious communities, a general apathy on doctrinal subjects has succeeded the excitement with which the Reformation was ushered in. The tendency of the present age is in the direction of more sweeping reforms, and when the time comes, as no thoughtful man can doubt it will with growing intelligence, for the people of Europe to cast off the shackles of

superstition and bigotry, it may be feared that things of more serious account than ecclesiastical systems and institutions may be swept away by the overwhelming tide so long pent up.

Meanwhile, there appears little probability of any great change. The territorial distinctions between Catholic and Protestant States remain much the same as when they were shaped out in the time of the Reformation, and the wars succeeding it. Each party holds its own; and there is little probability of a national secession from the Church of Rome, even in the Sardinian dominions, where many circumstances concur to point out its expediency, and even its possibility. Among others, it will not be forgotten, that the standard of Protestantism was raised in the valleys of Savoy, ages before it floated triumphantly in the north of Europe.

In 1841 there were 91 monasteries in Sardinia, containing 1093 regular monks, besides lay brothers, &c., and 16 convents with 260 nuns; the whole number of persons attached to these institutions being calculated at 8000. There are about the same number of secular clergy, including the bishops, dignitaries, and cathedral chapters, with the parochial clergy, the island being divided into 393 parishes. The population of Sardinia, by the last returns I was able to procure *, was 541,907 in 1850; so that one-ninth were ecclesiastics of one description or another. It should be stated, however, that most, if not all, the monasteries and convents have been lately sup-

* *Circonscrizione amministrativa delle provincie di Terra Ferma e della Sardegna.* — Torino, Stamperia Reale, 1850.

pressed, and the religious pensioned off, so that the system is dying out.

The revenues of the bishops' sees, and the cathedral and parochial clergy, were calculated in 1841 at about 66,000*l.*, arising from church lands, besides the tithes, estimated at 1,500,000 lire nove, or 60,000*l.*, supposed to be a low estimate, the tithes being worth one million of lire more. These revenues are exclusive of voluntary contributions, alms, offerings, and collections. The church lands contributed upwards of 3000*l.* annually as state subsidies, for the national debt, the maintaining roads and bridges, and the conveyance of the post. Mr. Tyndale estimates "the revenue of the see of Cagliari at from 60,000 to 80,000 scudi,—from 11,520*l.* to 15,360*l.* per annum; while that of the priests is about 1000 scudi, or 192*l.*" This gives some idea of the incomes of the Sardinian clergy. I imagine that the government has not interfered with any part of the ecclesiastical revenues, except those attached to the monasteries.

The fruit and vegetable markets of large foreign towns must always be attractive to a traveller, especially in the South and East, where the fruit, in great varieties, is so abundant, and he meets with vegetables unknown in the gardens and cookery of his own country. Not only so, but the dresses, and even the gestures and manners, of the country people, to say nothing of the dealings of the buyers, form a never-failing source of interest and amusement; while an additional zest is lent in a warm climate, by the freshness of the early hour at which the visit must be paid to be really enjoyed. The market at Cagliari is held in the suburb of Stampace, and approached by one of those avenues

shaded with exotic trees, which make such agreeable promenades in the neighbourhood of the city. The principal supply comes from Pula, Arabus, and other villages at considerable distances from Cagliari; the soil in the vicinity being too arid to be productive. The supply appeared abundant, and of excellent quality. Among the fruits, — it was in the early part of September, — I noted grapes, figs, pears, oranges, lemons, citrons, peaches, melons, and prickly pears. Among the vegetables, the heaps of tomatas, chilis, and other condiments were surprising, and there were gigantic "*torzi*," a kind of turnip-cabbage, and other varieties, whose names have escaped my memory.'

My visit to the Royal Museum was also paid at an early hour, through the kindness of Signor Cara, the Curator, who was so obliging as to show me also his cabinet of antiques at his private residence,—rich in cameos, intaglios, and scarabei of rare beauty. The Royal Museum occupies a suite of small apartments in the University. The collection owes great part of its objects of interest, and their good order and arrangement, to the indefatigable zeal and disinterested devotion of Signor Cara, whose appointments, and the allowance for purchasing objects, are not unworthy of a liberal government.

The collection of Roman antiquities occupying the entrance-wall is very meagre, considering the many stations established in the island during the republic and empire. Besides two colossal consular statues, having an air of dignity, and with the toga well chiselled, there was little to observe but some Roman milestones, sarcophagi, and fragments of various kinds.

The coins of the Roman period are numerous, but most

of them of little value. One here figured is, however, unique; being, I imagine, the only coin known to have been struck in the island. Atius Balbus, whose name and bust appear on the face *, was grandfather of the Emperor Augustus, and prefect of Sardinia about sixty years before Christ. The reverse represents a head wearing a singular cap, crowned by an ostrich plume; with a sceptre, and the words "Sardus Pater," who is supposed to be the founder of Nora, the first town built in Sardinia, and of Libyan and Phœnician origin.†

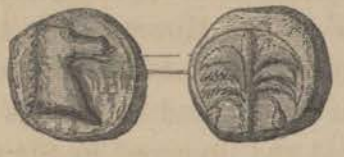
SARDO-ROMAN COIN.

The cabinet also contains about 100 coins of the Carthaginian period. Many such are found in the island, but, as may be supposed, not in numbers equal to those which attest the long duration of the Roman power. While Captain Smyth was engaged in his survey of the coast, a farmer in the island of St. Pietro, successively a Greek, Carthaginian, and Roman station, passed his

* Atia, the daughter of M. Atius Balbus, by Julia, sister of Julius Cæsar, was the mother of Octavius Augustus.—*Suetonius.*

† Cohen, in his *Déscription des Médailles Consulaires* recently published (Paris, 1857), notices a bronze medal of the same type, of which he says:—"Cette médaille était frappée par les habitans de la Sardaigne, sous le règne d'Auguste, et pour gagner ses bonnes grâces ils y placèrent le portrait de son aïeul en même tems que celui du fondateur de leur patrie." The cabinet of the British Museum contains a specimen of this bronze medal, "de fabrique très-barbare," to use Cohen's description. He does not appear to be aware of the existence of the silver coin, which is of a far better style.

ploughshare over an amphora of Carthaginian brass coins, of which Captain Smyth purchased about 250. "They were," he states, "with two exceptions, of the usual type: obverse, the head of Ceres; and reverse, a horse or palm-tree, or both." Some presented to me by Carlo Rugiu, one of which is here figured, have a horse's head on one face, and the palm-tree with fruit, probably dates, on the other.



CARTHAGINIAN COIN.

There are specimens in the British Museum, but not so good as those given me by Signor Rugiu. The coins in the possession of Captain Smyth appear to have represented the horse in full detail, as he mentions the peculiarity of their having a Punic character between the horse's legs, differing in every one. It need hardly be observed how appropriate, on an African coin, were such devices as the date-palm of the desert, and the horse, emblematic of its fiery cavalry.

Some Saracenic coins are also found in the island, with Arabic characters both on the obverse and reverse. The one here represented was also given me by Carlo Rugiu, with some Roman coins, both silver and brass. We do not find that the Saracens ever effected any permanent settlement in Sardinia; which accounts for the comparatively small number of these coins discovered. The Saracen pirates who infested the coast from the time that St. Augustine's relics were rescued, in 722, to so late a period as

SARACEN COIN.

1815, were more likely to pillage the money of the inhabitants than to leave any of their own behind them.*

The Terracotta collection in the Royal Museum exhibits about one thousand specimens of vases, &c. of Sardo-Phœnician, Carthaginian, Egyptian, and Roman fabric, similar to those preserved in the British Museum. In the natural-history department, the ornithological class is most complete, containing upwards of a thousand specimens of native and foreign birds, collected and prepared by Signor Cara, who has paid much attention to this branch of the science. Among the native objects of interest was the flamingo, frequenting, with other aquatic birds, in vast flocks, the lagunes in the neighbourhood of Cagliari, whither they resort during the autumn and winter, from the coast of Africa. The largest of these lakes, called the Scaffa, is six or seven miles long by three or four broad. Vast quantities of salt are procured from the salterns in the same neighbourhood and other parts of Sardinia, and it forms an important article of export, and of revenue. In conchology and mineralogy, the cabinet is rich both in foreign and native specimens; the minerals having been in great part collected by La Marmora, and arranged by him in 1835.

The Phœnician remains are, in some respects, the most

* Captain Smyth states that in 1798 upwards of 2000 Moors suddenly disembarked on the beach of Malfatano from six Tunisian vessels; when the town was surrounded and taken. Brutality and pillage in all their hideous forms visited every house; and 850 men, women, and children were driven into slavery. The unhappy captives remained at Tunis; and, from the embarrassments of the Sardinian Government, were not ransomed until the year 1805. In 1815 the Tunisians, recollecting the rich booty they had before obtained, reappeared off the port, but finding the garrison well prepared to give them a warm reception, they sheered off." — *Sketch of Sardinia*, p. 309.

interesting part of the collection. Among them we find a block of sandstone, with a Phœnician inscription, discovered in 1774, at Pula, the ancient Nora, now a pleasant village embowered in orange groves and orchards, and crowned with palms, on the coast of the Gulf, about sixteen miles from Cagliari. Nora, it may be remembered, is stated by Greek writers to have been the first town founded by colonists in the island of Sardinia; and though the inscription on the stone has not been satisfactorily deciphered, it seems to be agreed that it records the arrival of "Sardus," called "Pater," at "Nora," from "Tarshish," in Libya.

But the Sarde idols, already mentioned, form the unique feature in this collection. La Marmora enumerates 180 of these bronzes, the greater part of which are preserved in the museum at Cagliari, consisting principally of small images, varying from four to seventeen inches high, of irregular and often grotesque forms, and betraying a rude state of art.* They are considered miniatures of the large and original idols adored by the Canaanites and Syro-Phœnicians; and from their diminutive size may have been household gods. Mr. Tyndale conjectures that the "Teraphim" of Scripture were of the same class. There appears, however, no doubt that these bronzes, as well as the objects in Terracotta already mentioned, are of native manufacture. Thus, while the images appear to

* Among the other emblems of divinity we find the heads of dogs, cats, apes, and birds, and also rude figures of the boats of Isis, establishing a connection between the Egyptian and Phœnician mythologies. Some exhibit astronomical and astrological symbols. Other images appear to be carrying cakes, a part of the offering made to Astarte, to which Jeremiah alludes:—"The women knead their dough, to make cakes to the queen of heaven."— Chap. vii. 18.

be the symbols of a religion peculiar to the inhabitants of Sardinia at a very early period, they bear a certain affinity to similar objects of worship in other countries, especially in Syria and Egypt; so that in Signor Cara's nomenclature these remains are denominated Sardo-Phœnician and Sardo-Egyptian. It is remarkable, however, that no corresponding relics have been found in those countries.

There is a small collection of Sardinian antiquities in the British Museum, recently supplied by Signor Cara; but it does not contain, as might have been wished, any specimens of these singular images. They are accurately figured and described by La Marmora, and Mr. Tyndale has fully investigated their history and relations in his very valuable work. It would be out of place further to pursue the subject here, especially as we have already devoted a chapter to traces among the Sardes of the rites of Moloch and Adonis, in which two of these images are described. The subject is interesting both as connected with the Phœnician migrations, and as bringing to light symbols of that Canaanitish idolatry so frequently and emphatically denounced in the Sacred Writings.

Returning to modern times, I do not find that I have anything of importance to add to my notices of the present state of Cagliari, except the introduction of the Electric Telegraph connecting it with the continents of Europe and Africa. From its having been the medium of communication between England and India during the recent crisis, Cagliari has acquired a notoriety to which it had previously few pretensions. Some account of the establishment of this Telegraph will be given in our concluding chapters.

CHAP. XXXVII.

Porto-Torres. — Another Italian Refugee. — Embark for Genoa. — West Coast of Corsica. — Turin. — The Sardinian Electric Telegraph. — The Wires laid to Cagliari.

THE preceding notices of Cagliari were gathered during a visit to Sardinia in the autumn of 1857; the "Rambles" in this island, detailed in preceding chapters, having been rather abruptly terminated, under circumstances already adverted to, without our being able to reach the capital. On that occasion we embarked for the continent at Porto-Torres, the origin and decay of which place is before incidentally mentioned. The neighbourhood abounds in remains of Roman antiquities; and at a short distance is the cathedral of St. Gavino, one of the oldest structures in Sardinia, having been founded in the eleventh century. The roof is covered with lead, and supported by antique columns dug up in the adjacent ruins. There also were found two marble sarcophagi, preserved in the church, on which figures of Apollo surrounded by the Muses are represented in high relief.

Having to embark at an early hour, we were obliged to

pass a night at Porto-Torres, notwithstanding its notoriety for a most pestiferous atmosphere, occasioned, as usual, by the exhalations from the marshy lowlands adjoining the coast. The impression was confirmed by the miserable aspect of the place, one long wide vacant street, in which, as we drove down it, the effects of the intemperie were stamped on the sickly faces of the few stragglers we met. We found, however, a roomy and decent hotel, and, after rambling about the neighbourhood, sat down to our usual evening tasks of writing and drawing. We were in light costume, and had thrown open the casements, for though the apartment was both lofty and spacious, the air felt insufferably close and stifling. Shortly afterwards, on the waiter coming in to lay the supper table, he stood aghast at our exposure to the night air, and precipitately closed the casements, exclaiming, "Signore, it would have been death for you to have slept here in August or September; and, even now, the risk you are running is not slight."

This man was another of the Italian refugees, a Lombard; but of a very superior cast of character and intelligence to our *maître de cuisine* at Sassari. These qualities first opened out on his begging permission to examine my friend's drawings and some ancient coins which lay on the table; on both which he made remarks, showing that he was a person of education and taste. He had been an *avocat* at Milan, and, compromised by the insurrection, "You see," said he, "what I have been driven to," throwing a napkin over his shoulder with somewhat of a theatrical air. "But a good time is coming;

meanwhile, not having much to do here, I employ my time as well as I can. You shall see my little library;"— and he brought in some volumes, mostly classical, the Odyssey, Euripides, Sophocles, Æschylus, and Cornelius Nepos. After awhile he pulled out of his bosom, with some mystery, for he was still professedly a catholic, a small copy of Diodati's Italian version of the New Testament. "This," he said, with emphasis, "is my greatest consolation; I retire into the fields, and there I read it." It was impossible not to commiserate the fate of Ignazio Mugio, the Lombard refugee. A very different character was old Pietro, the steam-boat agent. Groping our way with some difficulty up a gloomy staircase, in the dusk of the evening, we found him, spectacles on nose, poring over a gazette by a feeble oil lamp. The old man was so eager for news that it was difficult to fix him to the object of our inquiries; and then he expatiated on the attractions of the neighbourhood, and the "chasse magnifique de grèves," as he called thrush-shooting, in the country round, if we came to Porto-Torres in the month of December. We laughed at the idea of such sport; but I think it is said that the thrushes, fattening on the olive berries, are very delicious.

A considerable commerce, considerable for a Sardinian port, gives some life to this desolate place; facilitated by Porto-Torres being the northern terminus of the great national road running through Sassari, only nine miles distant. The principal exports are oil and wine. The little haven is defended by a strong tower, erected in 1549. We found moored in the port several Greek brigs, polaccas, and feluccas, with their long yards and

pointed lateen sails; and the fine steam-boat which was to carry us to Genoa.

PORTO-TORRES.

The mountainous and nearly desert island of Asinara forms a fine object in running out of the gulf to which it gives its name, forming the north-western point; and the high lands of Corsica soon came once more in view. Our course lay along its western coast, the weather being favourable; but with a foul wind it is considered unsafe, and vessels run through the Straits of Bonifacio and coast the eastern side of the island. In the afternoon we were off the entrance of the Gulf of Ajaccio, and gazed from seaward on the Isles Sanguinaires, with the tower of the lighthouse, behind which the sun set on the pleasant evening when we took our view from the Chapel of the Greeks. Now, towards sunset, we were rapidly gliding along the shore of Isola Rossa, and the slanting rays glowing directly on the porphyritic cliffs gave a rich but

mellow intensity to the ruddy hue whence they derive their name. Some of the boats stop at the town, a new erection by Pascal Paoli, and the seat of an increasing trade. Leaving it behind, we ran along the coast of Corsica with a fair wind, exultingly bounding homewards as, the breeze freshening, our boat sprung from wave to wave, dashing the spray from her bows. Farewell to Corsica! Her grey peaks and shaggy hill-sides are fast fading from our sight, in the growing obscurity. We pass Calvi, famous in Mediæval and Nelsonian annals, San Fiorenzo, on which we had looked down in our rambles on the chestnut-clad ridges of the Nebbio; and the mountain masses of the Capo-Corso, now loom like dark clouds on the eastern horizon. All beyond is a blank. Again we cross the Tuscan Sea in the depth of the night. We are on deck when rosy morning opens to our view the glories of the Bay of Genoa. At six we are moored in the harbour, and have to wait for the visit of the officer of health. At last we land, breakfast, and take the rail to Turin.

At Turin we passed some hours very pleasantly at the British Minister's. We are indebted to Sir James Hudson for facilitating our excursion in Sardinia with more than official zeal and interest in its success. He knows the island well, having braved the inconveniences of rough travelling in its wildest districts. At his hotel we chanced to meet Mr. I. W. Brett, the promoter of a line of electric telegraph intended to connect the islands of Corsica and Sardinia with the European and African continents. A company had been formed to carry out this project, consisting principally of Italian shareholders, part of whose outlay was to be recouped, on the completion of the undertaking, by the Governments interested in its success

—the French in regard to Corsica and Algeria, and the Piedmontese as far as concerns Sardinia.

Starting from a point in the Gulf of Spezzia, the wires were to be carried by a submarine cable to the northern extremity of Capo-Corso; where landing they would be conveyed, through the island, partly by submarine channels, with a branch to Ajaccio, to its southern point near Bonifacio. Thence, submerged in a cable crossing the Straits, they would again touch the land at Capo Falcone, mentioned in these rambles as the nearest point in Sardinia; the distance being only about ten nautical miles. The wires were then to be conducted on posts, through the island of Sardinia, in a line, varying but slightly from our route, by Tempio and Sassari to Cagliari. From Cape Spartivento, or some point on the southern shore of Sardinia, a submarine cable was to be laid, the most arduous part of the whole undertaking, to the African coast; landing somewhere near Bona, a town on the western frontier of the French possessions in Algeria.

Up to the point of the landing in Sardinia all was evidently plain sailing; but when we met Mr. Brett at Turin, on our return from Sardinia, in November, 1853, he was under some anxiety about the land line through the island; the mountainous character of the northern province of Gallura presenting obstacles to the operation of carrying the wires through it, and the lawless character of the inhabitants threatening their safety. On both these points we were able to reassure him; we had seen and heard enough of the brave mountaineers to feel convinced that there was no cause for apprehension of outrages connected with the undertaking. And my fellow-traveller, who belonged to the scientific branch of the

army, had not passed through the country without making such observations as enabled him to satisfy Mr. Brett's inquiries respecting the line to be selected and its natural facilities.

In the end, the wires were successfully stretched throughout the island from Capo Falcone to Cagliari, after surmounting, however, serious obstacles, though not of the sort previously apprehended. For the success of this operation the company are greatly indebted to the exertions of Mr. William S. Craig, H. B. M.'s Consul-General in Sardinia. Having neither any personal interest in the concern, nor official connection with a Company entirely foreign in its object and supporters, he devoted his time gratuitously to the furtherance of this branch of its operations, actuated only by a desire to promote an important public undertaking. The whole practical management of the work (I do not speak of engineering, little of which could be required) devolved on Mr. Craig; and with much self-sacrifice, he threw into it all that zeal and intelligence which, with universal goodwill, have acquired for him the high estimation in which he is generally held.

I have before had occasion to mention the respect entertained for him by the mountaineers of Gallura, resulting from a former connection beneficial to parts of that district; and I feel convinced that his name and sanction better obviated any prejudices, and offered a broader shield for the protection of the wires from injury, than all the power of the Piedmontese officials, backed by squadrons of carabineers, could have done. Not only so, but Mr. Craig had less difficulty in making arrangements with the proprietors of the lands in the northern province than in the more civilised districts of the south, where, in some in-

stances, the privileges required were reluctantly conceded as a mark of personal respect.

It was on descending to the plains that the worst difficulties were encountered. Mr. Warre Tyndale states that during the construction of the great central road from Cagliari to Porto-Torres, which it took seven years to complete, more than half the engineers employed in the work died of the intemperie, or were obliged to retire from the effects of that fatal malady. This scourge swept off with no less virulence the workmen employed on the line of telegraph, and as the season advanced, cartloads after cartloads were carried to the hospitals, so that the works were stopped. Mr. Craig had to provide for all emergencies, the whole expenditure was managed by him, and this calamity added to his cares and responsibilities. But he persevered, and brought the operations to a successful end. Such valuable services merited a more liberal treatment than they received at the hands of those who gratuitously secured them. A body of English directors and shareholders would not have failed to mark their sense of the obligation conferred by some honorary acknowledgment. I have not heard of any such act of generosity on the part of the Sardo-French Company. It was a foreigner who remarked to me the *petitesses* which pervaded the dealings of his countrymen. I imagine that the phrase would be found particularly applicable to the dealings of this company, if all its history were known.

But we are anticipating occurrences. On our return from Sardinia, the operations of the Sardo-French Telegraph Company connected with the island were yet in embryo. The travellers who discussed the probabilities of success at Turin little thought that one of them would

two years afterwards, towards the close of the Crimean war, be the Chief of the Staff employed in the organisation and superintendence of the military telegraph service in the East, having to inspect the laying down many hundred miles of submarine cable and wires in the Black Sea; or that it would be the fortune of the other to witness the final accomplishment of the long-delayed and frustrated hopes of the Sardo-French Company, by being present at the laying down of the submarine Mediterranean cable between Cagliari and Bona on the coast of Algeria. But so it turned out; and the completion of this undertaking being an event in Sardinian history, considered by no less an authority than General Della Marmora to have an important bearing on the commercial prospects of the island,—and the operation of successfully submerging telegraph cables in very deep water, in oceans or seas, being both new and possessing considerable interest,—a short account by an eyewitness of the occurrences attending the laying down the African cable may prove both amusing and instructive. It will form an appropriate episode to the Sardinian Rambles, and in that view an additional chapter will be devoted to it.

For the rest, it only remains briefly to close the "Rambles" of 1853. Our visit at Turin reopened Sardinian interests; but after that, the best thing to be done was to hasten homewards before the inclemency of the season should retard our progress. Still, the snow fell heavily as we walked over the summit of the pass of the Mont-Cenis, preceding the diligence in which we had travelled all night. The railway had not then been extended from Turin to Suza on one side of the Alps, nor, on the other, beyond Châlons sur Saône, between Lyons

and Paris; so that, travelling by diligence, we were three nights and two days on the road to Paris. Both the French and Italian lines of railway have been much advanced since the period of our journey. To complete the line, it remains only that the gigantic undertaking of tunnelling the chain of the Alps be successfully executed. Allowing ourselves the refreshment of spending a day in Paris, we reached London in the evening of the 17th of November.

CHAP. XXXVIII.

Sardinian Electric Telegraph. — The Land Line completed.— Failures in Attempts to lay a Submarine Cable to Algeria. — The Work resumed. — A Trip to Bona on the African Coast.—The Cable laid.—Cagliari an Important Telegraph Station. — Its Commerce. — The return Voyage.— CONCLUSION.

AFTER completing the land line of telegraph, as already mentioned, the Sardinian Company * failed in three attempts at laying a submarine cable to connect the wires from Cagliari with the coast of Algeria. We will not here enter into an inquiry as to the causes of these disasters, instructive as it might be if we had space, and this were a fitting opportunity. Suffice it to say that the first experiment failed soon after leaving Cape Spartivento; on the second, the line was laid for about two-thirds of the course, but with such a profuse expenditure of the submarine cable that it was run out, and the enterprise abruptly terminated. A third attempt to renew the operation proved equally unsuccessful.

The project received a severe check from these repeated

* The concern is incorporated under the name of "The Mediterranean Telegraph Company," but the terms "Sardinian" or "Sardo-French" Company are adopted, as more distinctly indicating the nature of its origin and designs.

failures. The company had established their line, by sea and land, as far as Cagliari. So far, well: the communications of the respective Governments with their islands of Corsica and Sardinia were complete. Incidentally, also, England derived some advantage from the stations at Cagliari during the most anxious period of the crisis in Indian affairs. It was one step in advance towards telegraphic communications with India, though a short one. But the main object of the French Government in promoting the enterprise was to link its connection with Algeria by the electric wires; and till that was accomplished, the Company had no claim to be reimbursed for that portion of their expenditure guaranteed in the event of success.

One may imagine the dismay of the shareholders, mostly Italians, in this state of affairs. Their capital must have been greatly, if not altogether, exhausted by the expenditure on previous works and the abortive attempts at laying the African cable. It was now only, in all probability, that they became seriously alive to the difficulties of the undertaking, and the immense risks that must be incurred in laying submarine cables in great depths of water. For it was now known that the depth of the Mediterranean in many parts crossed by the track of submarine cables, is no less than that through which the Transatlantic cable has to be laid.

The prosecution of the scheme was suspended; but meanwhile time was running on, and the period fixed for completing the line had nearly expired. In this event, the government guarantee being forfeited, the concern would become a ruinous affair, as the telegraph traffic of two small islands could not be remunerative for the capital expended in connecting them with the continent. A short extension

of the term for completing the undertaking had been obtained; but that was nearly run out before matters were put in a better train.

In this emergency, Mr. Brett, the *gérant* of the foreign company, who had contracted for and personally superintended the previous attempts to lay the African cable, entered into negotiations for its being undertaken by Messrs. Newall and Co. They had an established reputation, not only as having long been manufacturers of submarine electric cables, the quality of which had been tested by continuous service, but as having, under contracts with the English Government, laid down between five and six hundred miles of cable in the Black Sea during the Crimean war, without a single mishap. They were, therefore, not mere theorists; having acquired by long experience a practical knowledge of submarine telegraphy which had not fallen to the lot of any others who had turned their attention to that branch of the science.

The overtures made on the part of the Sardo-French Company having been favourably received in the course, I believe, of the summer of 1857, Messrs. Newall and Co., nothing daunted by the previous failures, though doubtless fully aware of the difficulties they had to encounter, agreed to lay the African cable for a given sum, taking all risks on themselves. When it is understood that, about the same time, they also contracted with the "Mediterranean Extension Company," on like terms as to responsibility, to lay down submarine cables between Cagliari and Malta, and from Malta to Corfu, extending over 795 nautical miles, and making, with the African cable, a total of 920 miles, some idea may be formed of the magnitude of

the operations undertaken by a single firm. The mileage is more than one third of the distance embraced in the scheme of the great Transatlantic Company; and, as we find that the Mediterranean has its deep hollows as well as the Atlantic, the difficulties were proportionate.

Having entered into these engagements, Messrs. Newall and Co., after completing their contract for one half, 1250 miles, of the Transatlantic cable, lost no time in proceeding with the manufacture of the Mediterranean cables at their works in Birkenhead. Towards the end of August, the African cable, with some portion of the Malta cable, was shipped in the Mersey aboard their steamship Elba, the vessel before employed in laying down the cable between Varna and Constantinople. It should be mentioned that the African cable contained four wires, so that it was more ponderous and less flexible than the Atlantic cable, which has only one.

About this time, the writer happened to hear what was going on. Being then engaged in preparing these Sardinian "Rambles" for the press, he was desirous to make another trip to the island before their publication; and, besides the connection of the Cagliari line of telegraphs with the objects of his work, other circumstances had made him generally interested in the subject of submarine telegraphy. He therefore requested Mr. R. S. Newall's permission for his joining the expedition, which was kindly granted.

With this preliminary statement, we proceed at once to the scene of action. At the last moment it had been decided, for reasons with which I am unacquainted, but, I believe, on the suggestion of the foreign Governments interested in the project, to start from the African coast,

instead of from Cagliari; Cape de Garde, a few miles eastward of Bona, a town on the Tunisian frontier of the French possessions in Algeria, being selected as the point at or near which the submarine cable was to be submerged. The Elba, with the cable on board, anchored off Bona on Saturday, the 5th of September. Three war-steamships, appointed by the foreign Governments to attend and assist in the operations, had arrived some days before, and lay at anchor in the haven of Cazerain. The little squadron consisted of the Brandon, a large frigate under the French flag, with the Monzambano and the Ichnusa, both belonging to the royal Sardinian navy; and on board were the Commissioners appointed by the respective Governments to watch the operations.

It blew hard after the Elba's arrival, and the ships being detained in harbour, waiting for a favourable wind, opportunities offered of landing at Bona, and making some excursions into the surrounding country. The old Arab town rises from the sea in the form of an amphitheatre, and you see its high embattled walls running up the hillside and embracing in its enceinte the citadel, or Casbah, crowning the heights; the whole backed by the towering summits and shaggy slopes of the chain of Mount Edough. Within is a labyrinth of narrow streets; that leading direct from the port crossing a steep ridge to the Place d'Armes, a square with a fountain in the centre, overhung with palms and other exotics, and where French architecture is singularly mixed with the Moorish style. On one side stands a mosque, with its tall minaret; on the other, range cafés and restaurants, and magazins de mode, with their lofty fronts, arcades, and balconies. We linger for a moment on the spectacle offered by the various popula-

tions which crowd the square from morn to eve, and most after nightfall; a motley crowd of Arabs, Moors, Zouaves, Chasseurs, Jews, and Maltese. In the picturesque contrast of costume it presents, the gayest French uniforms possess no attractions compared with the white and flowing bournous, with even the sheepskin mantle of the poor Arab of the desert, the bright braided caftan of the Moor, the turban, and the fez. But the limits assigned to this work being already exceeded, I may not allow myself to dwell on the numberless objects which attract the attention of a curious traveller, in scenes where the modes and forms of Oriental life are singularly blended with those that bear the freshest European stamp.

Nor is this the place for more than noting an excursion to the picturesque ruins of Hippona, the old Roman city, the Hippo-Regius, where the great St. Augustine laboured in the African episcopate, and ended his days during the sufferings of Genseric's siege. They stand on a hillock facing the sea, now covered with thickets of wild olive trees and fragments of the buildings. What a plain is that you see from the summit, stretching away in all directions, a vast expanse of grassy meadows on the banks of the river Seybouse; parched indeed now by the torrid heat of an African summer, but of rich verdure after the rains! What prodigious ricks of hay we observe at the French cavalry barracks, as we ride along! What growth of vegetables in the irrigated gardens of the industrious, but turbulent, Maltese! Surely, but for the French inaptitude to colonisation, this part of Algeria, at least, might be turned to good account.

Changing the scene for a moment from the sultry plains, we may just note another excursion, which led

to the summit of the pass crossing the chain of Mount Edough. At the top we look westward over a sea of mountains, towards and beyond Constantine, the strongholds of the indomitable Kabyles. Turning homewards, we slowly descend the winding road, among slopes covered with a coarser *maquis* — still more fitted to endure the drought — than the evergreen thickets of Corsica and Sardinia; the dwarf palm, *chamærops humilis*, most prevailing. Bona, with its walls and terraces and the Casbah and the minarets, rising above a grove of orchards and gardens, now makes a pleasing picture. Beyond, in the still water of the haven, our little fleet lies at anchor, with the French guardship; outside, the blue Mediterranean is now very gently rippled by the evening breeze.

We are recalled to the ships, and hasten on board, for the wind having changed, with a promise of fair weather, it is decided to commence operations. The point selected for landing the shore-end of the cable was a sandy cove, a little to the eastward of Cape de Garde, or as it is otherwise called Cap Rouge, a literal translation of *Ras-el-Hamrah*, the name given it by the natives. There is an easy ascent from the cove to Fort Génois, about half a mile distant. The fort, a white square building at the edge of the cliffs, said to have been built by the Genoese to protect their coral fisheries on this coast, was convenient for establishing a temporary telegraph station, wires being run up to it from the end of the submarine cable.

It was a lovely morning, the sun bright in a cloudless sky and the blue Mediterranean calm as a lake, when the little squadron having got up steam, ran along the shore, and successively anchored in the cove. There floated, in happy union, the flags of the three allied Powers re-

cently engaged in very different operations: and the ships, with their boats passing and repassing, formed a lively scene contrasted with that desert shore, on the rocks of which a solitary Arab stood watching proceedings so strange to him.

The Elba's stern having been brought round to the land, the ship was moored within cable's length of the sandy beach; but the operation of landing the submarine cable was delayed in consequence of the neglect of the Sardinian company's agents, whose duty it was to have the land-line of telegraph wires ready to communicate with Fort Génois. This occupied the whole day, and I took advantage of it, landing in one of the first boats, to make a long ramble, visiting, in the course of it, Fort Génois, an encampment of Arabs at some distance in the interior, and climbing to the lighthouse on Cape de Garde, commanding, as may be imagined, magnificent views. It was a toilsome march, over rocks and sands, and through prickly thickets, in the full blaze of an African sun at noontide; but the excursion was full of interest, and not without its trifling adventures.

The shore works were not completed till sunset, when, all the boats being recalled to the ships, they got under weigh, the Monzambano towing the Elba, with the Ichnusa ahead, and the Brandon on her larboard bow. The engineers began paying out the cable at eight o'clock, proceeding at first slowly, as the night was dark, and being desirous to try cautiously the working of the machinery. As the water deepened, the cable ran out fast, and the speed was increased, so that by midnight we had run about seventeen miles, with a loss in slack, it was reckoned

up to that time, of under twenty per cent. of cable, compared with the distance run.

Few, I imagine, aboard the Elba got much sleep that night. The very idea of sleep was precluded by the incessant roar of the cable, rushing, like a mighty cataract, through the iron channels confining its course over the deck, while the measured strokes of the steam-engine beat time to the roar. Having laid down for two hours, I gave up my cabin to one of our numerous guests; for the French and Italian commissioners being now on board the Elba, besides Mr. Werner Siemens and his staff of German telegraphists, her accommodations were fully tried; and as for languages, she was a floating Babel. Coming on deck at twelve o'clock, the lighthouse on Cape de Garde was still visible. The attendant ships carried bright lanterns at their mastheads, sometimes throwing up signal rockets; and so the convoy swept steadily on through the darkness, the Elba still following in the wake of the Monzambano. Mr. Newall and Mr. C. Liddell, who directed the whole operations, never quitted their post at the break. The telegraphists, from their station amidship, tested the insulation from time to time, speaking to the station at Fort Génois. Looking down into the mainhold, which was well lighted up, you saw the men cutting the lashings to release the cable, as, gradually unfolding its serpentine coils from the cone in the centre, it was dragged rapidly upwards by the strain of its vast weight, and rushed through the rings to the vessel's stern. There the speed was moderated, before it plunged from the taffrail into the depths beneath, by the slow revolutions of a large wheel, round which the cable took several turns.

As day broke and the sun rose magnificently over the

Mediterranean, Galita Island came in sight, distant from thirty to forty miles to the eastward; the high lands of Africa being still visible. With the sea perfectly calm, all augured well for the success of the enterprise, except that serious apprehensions were entertained lest the cable, paying out so fast in the great depth of water we were now crossing,—1500 fathoms,—might not hold out to reach the land. Thus we ran on all the morning, the vessel's speed being increased to between five and six knots per hour, and the strain on the cable to five tons per mile; the depth ranging from 1500 to 1700 fathoms.

Towards the afternoon the land of Sardinia was in sight between fifty and sixty miles ahead, our course being steered towards Cape Teulada, the extreme southern point of the island. By sunset we had reached within twelve miles of the shore, and angles having been carefully taken to fix our exact position, we anchored in eighty fathoms water. Soon afterwards the attendant ships closed in, and anchored near us for the night. The little squadron, well lighted, formed a cheerful group, the sea was smooth as a mill-pond, and the mountains of Sardinia, after reflecting the last rays of the setting sun, loomed heavily in the growing twilight. All hands on board the Elba were glad of rest after thirty-six hours of incessant toil.

In the morning, as we had run out the whole of our cable proper, a piece of the Malta cable was spliced on, with some smaller coils also on board. Meanwhile, the Ichnusa had gone ahead at daybreak to take soundings, and when all was ready we began paying out the cable, being then, as already stated, about twelve miles from the land. All went on smoothly, and there was scarcely any loss of cable by slack. The eye turned naturally, again

and again, from anxiously counting the lessening coils in the hold to measure our decreasing distance from the shore, as its bold features and indentations became hourly more distinct. Cape Teulada stood right ahead, a bold headland, with peaked summits 900 feet high. It forms the eastern point of the Gulf of Palmas, and has a long face of precipitous cliffs towards the sea. To the west of this deep inlet appeared the rocky islands of San Antioco and San Pietro, with cliffs of volcanic formation; and the Toro rock stood out a bold insulated object, 500 or 600 feet high, marking the entrance of the Gulf of Palmas, a spacious bay offering excellent anchorage.

We had run ten miles towards a beach under the cliffs, a little to the eastward of Cape Teulada, when the small cable, now in course of being paid out, suddenly parted. The mishap occurred about a mile and a half from the shore, in forty fathoms water, with a sandy bottom. It was provoking enough to have our expectations baulked, when holding on for another half hour we should have succeeded in bringing the cable to land; but, for our comfort, the main difficulties of the enterprise were overcome. The African cable had been securely laid in the greatest depths of the Mediterranean, and the shore-end of the line could be easily recovered in the shallow water. The only question was, whether it should be immediately effected; but for this the weather had become very unfavourable. The wind had been blowing strong from the south-east all the morning; and a gust of it caught the Elba's stern, and canted it suddenly round, when the small cable snapped like a packthread. Rather a heavy sea was now running, and, on the whole, it was thought advisable to defer the concluding

operations until an entirely new end to the cable could be procured from England.

For this purpose, and at the same time to bring out the Malta cable, the Elba was despatched homeward a few hours after the accident happened. Fresh angles having been carefully secured, nothing remained but to take leave of our friends before the squadron parted,—the Brandon for the Levant, and the Sardinian frigates for ports in the island. While all belonging to the Elba considered that the submersion of a cable between Algeria and the coast of Sardinia was virtually a *fait accompli*, it was almost painful to witness the dismay of the Italians, at the mishap which had occurred to cloud their anticipations. It was evident that they entirely distrusted all assurances of the contractors' ability to recover the end of the cable, and perfect the line. Their fears were groundless; within a few weeks the new coil was brought from England, and the end of the submerged cable having been grappled at the first haul, the work was completed without any difficulty. Messrs. Newall and Liddell immediately proceeded to lay down the Cagliari and Malta, and the Malta and Corfu cable, 375 and 420 miles respectively; both which they effected with entire success in the months of November and December following, with a very small average waste of cable over the distance, and in depths equally great with those in which the African line was laid.

My own object now being to reach Cagliari, the commander of the Monzambano was kind enough to give me a passage in his fine frigate. I got on board just as the officers and their guests were sitting down to dinner under an awning on the deck. Among them was the old General Della Marmora, whose love of science and devotion

to the interests of Sardinia had induced him, though suffering from bad health, to make the voyage for the purpose of witnessing the important experiment. I found that he did not share in the apprehensions of the Italian shareholders on board as to the loss of the cable. The General had long cherished the idea that the ports of Sardinia, and especially Cagliari, are destined to partake largely of the commercial advantages resulting from a variety of recent events. In a little work, already referred to, which he was kind enough to give me*, he points out the fine position of Cagliari, its spacious gulf, with good anchorage, open to the south, and in the highway of all ships navigating the Mediterranean between the Straits of Gibraltar, the Levant, and the Black Sea. A glance at the map, he truly observes, will show no other port, either on the coast of northern Africa, in Sicily, or the south of Italy, which can be its rival. Malta alone competes with it both in position and as a harbour; but he justly asks,—"Can a barren rock like Malta be compared, in a commercial point of view, with an island of such extent, and possessing so many natural resources, as Sardinia?"

The General also points out the advantages offered by the electric telegraph station at Cagliari to masters of ships bound to the Mediterranean, the Levant, and the Black Sea, from the ports of Northern Europe, or, *vice versâ*, to those coming from the eastward, to induce them to touch at Cagliari. After, perhaps, long and wearisome voyages, they will find, he observes, in their very track, in the heart of the Mediterranean, the means of correspond-

* *L'Istmo di Suez, e la Stazione Telegrafico-Electrica di Cagliari; Ragiamento del T. G. Alberto Della Marmora. Torino*, 1856.

ence, in a few hours, with their families and their owners, receiving news and instructions from home. These facilities he considers of inestimable value; and it strikes us that the area included in the General's observations will be much extended when the electric wires are carried across the Atlantic, and that American ships are more likely to avail themselves of the advantages offered than those of any other nation.

Without sharing the sanguine anticipations of the excellent General La Marmora as to the speedy regeneration of Sardinia, and the development of her natural resources, undoubtedly great as they are, the remark may be allowed, that it would be a singular and happy event if this island, which appears to have been one of the first, if not the first, station of the earliest maritime people, in their advance towards Western Europe, should, now that the tide of civilisation, so long flowing from the East, has evidently taken a reflex course, become again that centre of commercial intercourse for which its geographical position so well fits it.

Towards evening, the Monzambano was running along the iron-bound coast terminating with Cape Spartivento, the western headland of the Gulf of Cagliari. I know not whether it was from the position of the ruins, or the hazy state of the atmosphere, night coming on, that I failed to make out some Cyclopean vestiges mentioned by Captain Smyth—Mr. Tyndale says they are a large Nuraghe—as standing on one of the most remarkable summits, at an elevation of upwards of 1000 feet, and called by the peasants, "The Giants' Tower." "This structure," observes Captain Smyth, "situated amongst bare cliffs, wild ravines, and desolate grounds, appeared a ruin of art amidst a ruin of

nature, and imparted to the scene inexpressible grandeur." During our passage we had a stormy sky and a strong head-wind, the sun setting gorgeously among masses of purple and orange clouds. There was nothing to relieve the barren aspect of this desert coast but the grey watch-towers from point to point, similar to those we saw on the coasts of Corsica; and, having paced for an hour the frigate's long flush deck, I was glad to turn-in early, and enjoy the comforts of a state cabin after the fatigues and watches of the two preceding days and nights.

The contrary wind retarded our progress, and it was not till after daylight that, approaching the harbour of Cagliari, I enjoyed the fine view, described in a former chapter, of the city, stretching a long line of suburbs at the base of the heights crowned by the Casteddu, with its towers and domes. The frigate entering the port was moored alongside the government wharf; from which may be inferred the depth of water, and the class of vessels the port is capable of receiving. It now contained only about twenty ships, one only of which, a brig, was under the English flag. The rest were of small burthen, and mostly Genoese and French. General La Marmora states, in the Memoir before quoted, that "since the crosses of Savoy and of Genoa have been united in the same flag," the Genoese have turned much attention to the trade of Sardinia; and that a company was forming for the improvement of the port of Cagliari, in order to draw to it some part of the corn trade of the Black Sea. Thus the ancient granary of Rome might become the emporium of the trade in corn for Italy and Southern France, and even for Africa; the General observing, with what reason there may be some doubt, that, while only two voyages can be

made between the ports of those countries and the Black Sea, three, or even four such, could be accomplished from Cagliari.

It is to be regretted that I did not obtain the latest statistics of the commerce of Sardinia, and the port of Cagliari in particular, from our very intelligent Consul, Mr. Craig; recollecting only his having mentioned that coal is the principal import from England;—France and Genoa, I conclude, supplying manufactured articles and colonial produce. Salt, he said, was the chief export, great part of it being shipped to Newfoundland and Labrador.

I cannot mention Mr. Craig, for the last time in these pages, without an acknowledgment of the many kind offices for which I am indebted to him during the present and preceding visits to Sardinia, nor can I easily forget the pleasure enjoyed in his amiable family circle. Hours so spent in a foreign country have a double charm; for in such agreeable society the traveller breathes the atmosphere, and is restored to the habits, of his cherished home. I have no reason to think that Mr. Craig's long and valuable services are not duly appreciated by his Government; but it might be wished that, in any re-arrangement of the consular service, they be taken into consideration. It is a sort of honourable exile for a man to spend sixteen years of his life on a foreign service, with a family growing up, who enjoy very rare opportunities of conversing with any of their own countrymen, and still less of their countrywomen, in their mother tongue. I take some liberty in venturing to offer these wholly unauthorized remarks on a subject of some delicacy; and only wish I could flatter myself they have any chance of reaching influential quarters, and not being forgotten. Mr. Craig's position, re-

spected and esteemed as he long has been, is eligible in many respects; but it might perhaps be improved.

At the Consul-General's I again met some of the officers of the Ichnusa, to whom, as well as to Boyl commanding the Monzambano, I wish to offer my acknowledgments for many civilities. Lieutenant Baudini, of the Ichnusa and other Sardinian officers who understand English, may chance to peruse this page, and will interpret my sentiments to their brother officers. Commandant Boyl was kind enough to give me a passage to Genoa, being under orders for that port. We had a pleasant run, the style of living on board the Monzambano being excellent, the society agreeable, and enjoying magnificent weather. I have before observed that the officers of the Sardinian navy are intelligent and gentlemanly, and appear to be well up to their profession. The crews are smart, and every thing aboard the ship was in the highest order and conducted with perfect discipline.

Steaming close in-shore along the eastern coast of Sardinia, remarkable principally for its bold and sterile character, there was a striking contrast in the appearance of the same coast of Corsica, which came in sight after crossing the mouth of the Straits of Bonifacio. This was comparatively verdant, not only as regards the fertile plains of the *littorale*, described in an early chapter, but, even where the mountain ranges approached the Mediterranean south of these extensive plains, the sterile aspect of their towering summits and precipitous cliffs was often relieved by immense forests encircling their bases, while every hillside and slope to the valleys appeared densely clothed with the evergreen *macchia*, for which Corsica is so remarkable.

Part of this coast was already well known to the homeward bound traveller: again he caught sight of the bold outlines of Elba and Monte Cristo, rising out of the Tuscan sea; again, as on the first evening of these rambles, the white terraces of Bastia reflected the rays of the setting sun. Soon afterwards the mountain ranges of Capo-Corso were veiled in darkness, and, as we ran along the shore nothing was visible but the twinkling lights of the fishermen's huts in the little *marinas*, to bring to mind those features which had so fascinated us on our first approach to the island.

Again, farewell to Corsica! Farewell to the twin islands which, like emeralds set in an enamelled vase, deck the centre of the great Mediterranean bason, embraced by the coasts of Italy, France, and Spain,—radiant points midway to Africa, in the great highway to the East, and partaking the varied character of all these climes. It had been my fortune not only to ramble through these islands from north to south, but, in different voyages, to sail round the entire coasts of both, except some part of the west of Sardinia. I can only wish that these pages more adequately represented the impressions made under the opportunities thus enjoyed.

It was again my fortune to approach the lovely bay of Genoa with the earliest morning light; and, taking leave of my good friends on board the Monzambano, I landed before breakfast. To vary the route homeward, instead of crossing the Mont-Cenis, as had been done in frost and snow at a late season of the year in the former tour, I enjoyed the enviable contrast of journeying along the *Riviera di Ponente* from Genoa to Nice,—that exquisite strip of country between the Apennines and the Medi-

terranean, studded with orchards, orange groves, vineyards, and gardens; with towns, towers, churches, and convents, nestled in the groves, washed by the sea, or perched high on rocky pinnacles; and all this encircling the lovely Bay of Genoa, the road being carried *en corniche* along its winding shores and round its jutting points. Of this exquisite scenery no description of mine could convey any adequate idea to those who have not seen it, and those who have will need little memento to bring its varied features to their recollection.

Farewell, a long farewell to, perhaps, the loveliest strip of country in the bright South! The Neapolitan proverb may be applied with equal justice to the Ligurian, as to the fair Campanian, coast,—*vedere e pói morire*,—a fitting motto wherewith to conclude the tale of an old man's wanderings.

Pursuing the journey from Nice to Marseilles, in heat and in dust, the express train, by Lyons and Paris, conveyed the Rambler to Calais in about thirty hours, and six more landed him in London.

THE END.

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